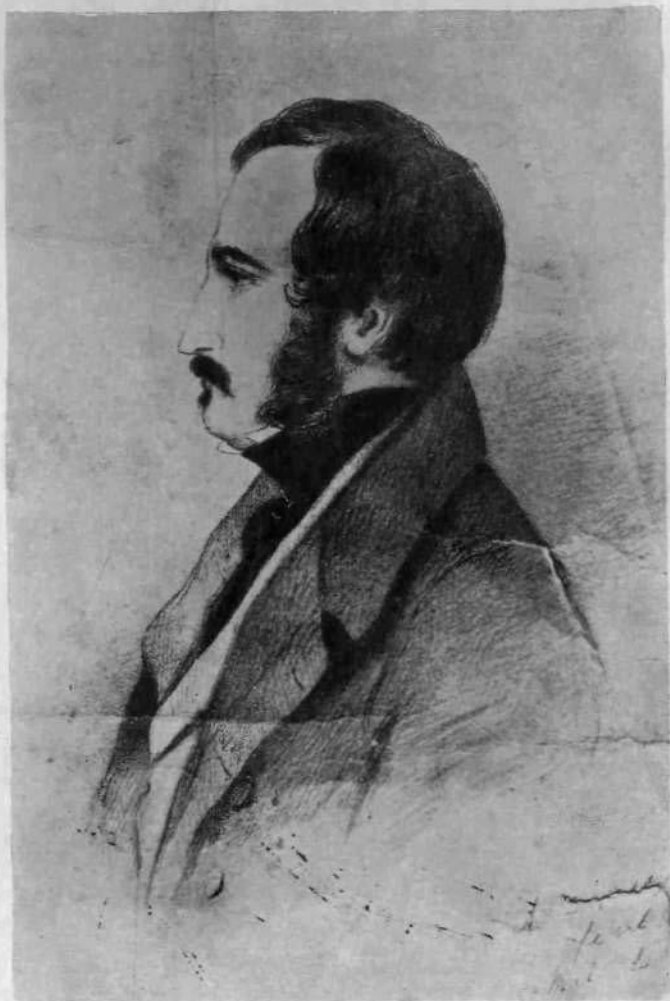


2663

THE LETTERS  
OF  
PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR  
TO  
HENRY REEVE



MEADOWS TAYLOR IN 1840  
*(From a sketch by Count D'Orsay)*

2663

THE LÊTTÊRS  
OF  
PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR  
TO  
HENRY REEVE

Edited  
with an Introduction  
by  
SIR PATRICK CADELL  
C.S.I., C.I.E.

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P. R. C.

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## INTRODUCTION

FOR the appreciation of these letters from India some account of the writer's career and surroundings should be given. This can be done briefly since anyone interested in him should read his *Story of My Life*: an autobiography, as has been said, of transparent truthfulness. This work, originally issued in 1877, the year after Taylor's death, was republished in 1920 by the Oxford University Press under the loving editorship of Mr. Henry Bruce, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service, who, as a boy, had known Taylor.

Philip Meadows Taylor came of good clerical stock, largely Nonconformist, on both sides. His great-great-grandfather married into the family of Meadows, from one of whom, Sir Philip Meadows, a well-known figure in the time of the Commonwealth and the Restoration, the future novelist, like his father and other members of his family, derived his first two names. In addition to the numerous Taylors of his relationship who are recorded in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, his kindred included the literary families of Austin and Martineau, as well as Henry Reeve, to whom the letters in the present book were addressed.

The father of our Meadows Taylor, whose first name of Philip seems to have been dropped at an early age, failed to maintain the family fortunes. He was in business as a merchant in Liverpool, and in 1807 married a daughter of Bertram Mitford of Mitford Castle in Northumberland. The author, the first of five sons of the

marriage, was born on 12 September 1808. His father's affairs became involved in 1815. After equally unsuccessful commercial enterprise in Dublin, where his mother had some property, he returned to England and does not seem to have had remunerative employment thereafter. This doubtless accounted for the scanty and irregular schooling which was all that the future novelist received, and for his being sent, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, while his family were still in Dublin, to hard and uncongenial work in the office of a Liverpool merchant. It was not surprising that, when his father met a man who was apparently a successful merchant in Bombay and offered to employ the boy on a good salary with the promise of a partnership when he came of age, the proposal was gladly accepted. Young Meadows Taylor thus sailed for India in April 1824 and reached Bombay on 1 September when he was still a few days short of his sixteenth birthday. The merchant's business proved, however, to be a mere retail shop, and far from flourishing at that; nor had any previous intimation been given of Taylor's coming. Fortunately for him, a cousin of his mother, Mr. William Newnham, was then Chief Secretary of the Government of Bombay. He was perhaps the best-known figure of the time in the social life of Bombay, and his portrait still hangs in the Byculla Club, of which he was a principal founder. It was not in his power to obtain for his young relative a place in the East India Company's Service, civil or military, the appointments to which were made by the Court of Directors in England. He did, however, all that was possible by getting from his friend, the well-known Sir Charles Metcalfe, then Resident at

Hyderabad, a commission for Taylor in the Nizam's army. Thus Taylor left Bombay on 18 November 1824 to begin his military service at Aurungabad, where was stationed the regiment to which he was posted, the 6th Infantry of the Nizam's Service.

As so much of Taylor's life was passed in that service, the circumstances of the Nizam's regular army may be briefly described. Its organization out of the ill-paid and ill-disciplined forces previously maintained had been inaugurated by Henry Russell who was Resident at Hyderabad from 1811 to 1820. This reorganized force was officered from two sources: by officers belonging to the East India Company's armies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, and by 'local' officers appointed largely by the Resident. The latter were naturally an uneven lot. They included some retired officers of the Royal Navy and Army, but also others of varied origin and degree of education, who had survived from the previously existing force and had been not incorrectly described as 'military adventurers'. There was also a considerable proportion with mixed British and Indian blood, the sons of officers in the King's or Company's armies, the offspring of the connexions of considerable permanency which were entered into by some officers in those days. The proportion of officers from the Company's armies steadily increased, especially in the higher commands, and in 1828, within four years of Meadows Taylor's posting, it was decided that no further local commissions should be given. When, therefore, Mr. Newnham wrote to Meadows Taylor's mother that 'the Nizam's Service holds out the most flattering prospects: and, if he qualifies himself in

point of duty and in acquaintance with the native languages, the road to high and lucrative employment will be open to him', he was referring to the opportunities for appointments in the civil administration of the Nizam's territories which then appeared to be in prospect. Nor was the expectation unjustified at this time. We find Frank Gresley, who had been appointed to the Bengal army after an excellent education, and with influential connexions, writing in 1826, when offered a post in the Nizam's forces, 'It is about the best line open to the Military in this country. I shall be almost certain of obtaining civil employment hereafter.'

The use of the officers of the Nizam's army in the attempt to introduce order into the misgoverned and mismanaged territories of the Nizam had been begun by Sir Charles Metcalfe. It was continued by Mr. Byam Martin who succeeded him as Resident in 1825. Meadows Taylor, who joined his regiment at Aurungabad early in December 1824, evidently appreciated his early days with congenial spirits among the officers at that station. He enjoyed also a good deal of exciting sport such as tiger-shooting and pig-sticking, in the course of which he met James Outram and other well-known sportsmen serving in the territory of the Bombay Government near Aurungabad. He took part, moreover, in several small expeditions necessitated by outbreaks of disorder in the border country between the Bombay Presidency and the Nizam's districts. What was even more important, he made himself proficient in the local languages, and attracted the favourable notice of the Resident. Thus he was appointed Superintendent of Bazars at Bolarum and, later, Assis-

tant Superintendent of Police. It was the latter duty which gave him his first insight into the horrors of the 'Thagi' system; and he later claimed, with some justification, that, had he continued in his civil appointment, he might have been the first to make the evils of that system widely known to the world. This distinction fell more properly to Colonel William Sleeman, and Taylor had to remain content with the knowledge that it was his *Confessions of a Thug*, based almost entirely on his own first-hand material, that assisted in making Sleeman's work famous.

Taylor's hopes of civil advancement were brought to an abrupt conclusion for the time being by one of the reversals of policy that have so frequently marked the dealings of the Government of India with the Indian States: that variation between interference, perhaps occasionally excessive, in their internal affairs, and complete abstention from intervention, on which abuses often followed. In 1829 the old Nizam, Sikander Jah, died, and Lord William Bentinck, then Governor-General, who was strongly in favour of the policy of non-intervention, offered to withdraw the European officers from employment in the civil administration, and even to agree to the abolition of the Nizam's reformed army, if that ruler would substitute a payment of twenty lakhs in its place. The Nizam eagerly accepted the withdrawal of the European officers from civil employment. They interfered too actively with the operations of his all-powerful Minister, Chandu Lal. These officers, therefore, were sent back to their regiments in 1829, though the Resident tried to have Taylor continued in his Police appointment. It

seemed likely that the military force itself would be abolished, but the Nizam was proud of it and felt it to be necessary for the security of his territory. It is fair to observe that the system of intervention was, though beneficial, anomalous. As Gresley, who was equally affected by the change, observed: 'The state of affairs cannot go on. Either we must assume the *entire* management of the Country, or we must withdraw.' Thus Taylor was posted again to his regiment, and served with it till he went on leave in 1837, being its adjutant from 1830. There is no reason to doubt that he was a good and conscientious officer, who was especially successful in winning the affection of his Sepoys. They assimilated, *more Indico*, his name to one familiar to them as a title of one of their deities, and this appellation, 'Mahadev Baba', that is, 'Little Father Mahadev', spread from them to the civil population amongst whom Meadows Taylor worked. It was of real use to him on more than one difficult occasion in his later career. It is, however, sufficiently clear from his letters that he had neither the training nor the inclination for the routine of the military profession and that he felt the lack of congenial associates in his regimental life. There were very few officers in a Nizam's regiment and it may easily be supposed from the circumstances of their appointment that only a small proportion of these were likely to share his literary tastes.

Taylor's position in Hyderabad, and his outlook on the conditions surrounding him, must have been greatly affected by his marriage. His father-in-law, William Palmer, was the son of General William Palmer, once military secretary to Warren Hastings and afterwards



Resident at the courts of three of the most important Indian states. William Palmer the elder had first married as a subaltern in the West Indies. His second wife was a Begum of the ruling family of Oudh. This union was no temporary or disreputable connexion. She was painted with her husband by Zoffany, and the picture now hangs in the India Office. After her husband's death in 1816 she lived an honoured inmate of her son William's household till her own death in 1828. Taylor, in his autobiography, speaks of her as 'grand looking' and was glad to receive her blessing. William Palmer the younger, after a good education in England, had come to Hyderabad towards the end of his father's period as Resident at that place. He was for some fourteen years in the military service of the Nizam, and saw a good deal of fighting. His main inclination, however, lay in other directions. As Sutherland<sup>1</sup> writes: 'From his talents, acquirements and adoption of native habits and manners, Mr. Palmer was peculiarly calculated for the meridian of Hyderabad, and was employed in affairs of some delicacy by the Minister, Chundoo Lal, and by the Resident.' In 1810 he founded the banking and mercantile house of William Palmer and Company. For several years he financed the operations, in all their forms, of the Nizam and his Minister. His relations with the Residency in the time of Sir Henry Russell were close and intimate, and through one of his partners, Sir William Rumbold, he was supposed to have the backing of the Governor-General, the Marquis of Hastings. To quote Sutherland

<sup>1</sup> John Sutherland: *Relations between the British Government in India and the Native States.*

again : 'Very few in the Nizam's Territory could separate the interests of William Palmer and Company from those of the Hon'ble Company. The Hon'ble Company and the Palmer Company, the *Residency-ki-kotee* and the *Palmer-ki-kotee*, were almost synonymous with them.'

Such a position demanded, at least according to Indian ideas of the time, a high scale of living and William Palmer did not disappoint the expectation. By his own account he lived 'in a hugger-mugger style': but this meant, in the words of another writer, that 'his table abounded with every luxury obtainable and glittered with vessels of gold and silver: there were never less than thirty guests daily at his house'. This doubtless accounted for his being known among the Europeans as 'King' Palmer. Among Indians, and in the traditions of his own relatives, he seems to have been remembered as 'Kotee' Palmer from the size or magnificence of his *kothi* or palace.

The operations of the firm were checked and finally terminated by the action of the Resident, Sir Charles Metcalfe, in the manner set out in Dr. Edward Thompson's biography of that statesman. Although the firm was paid nearly a crore of rupees, or about £1,250,000 at the exchange of the day, on account of its claims against the Nizam's Government, amounts exceeding twenty lakhs, or about £250,000, were barred, and the Nizam's Minister was prohibited from settling the deficiency when he expressed the desire to do so. Not only had the advances to the Nizam's Government been made by the firm principally out of borrowed money, but large sums had been lent to other borrowers, and these proved irrecoverable.

Thus, to use the words of a sympathizer, 'the Firm collapsed in the most honourable manner'.

Although there can be no real doubt of the necessity for Metcalfe's action, there was another side of the question which can be found best set out in Briggs's book *The Nizam*, written, it may be noted, long after the crash, when there was no prospect of the amounts claimed being recovered. Palmer's case briefly was that he had found the money necessary to finance the Nizam's treaty obligations at a critical period of the Maratha War in 1818. The money had been advanced to the Nizam at a very high rate of interest, but no one else could have been found at the time to lend money to the Nizam on any terms whatsoever. Moreover, Palmer and Company had themselves to borrow the money from Indian capitalists at rates very little below those charged to the Nizam's Government.

There were obvious weaknesses in Palmer's case, but it could hardly have received so much sympathy in India and in England had it been wholly bad. The firm had been treated less liberally than Metcalfe had proposed. He had recommended that it should be allowed to receive the bonus of eight lakhs which it had been promised, and six lakhs as compensation for the loss caused by the cancellation of contracts. These sums were disallowed by the acting Governor-General. An impartial historian, Gribble, writes that the firm was treated with undue severity. We find Gresley, a man of good standing, and a friend and admirer of Metcalfe, writing to his relatives in England:

'I spent a couple of months at Hyderabad. I lived mostly

with William Palmer and Sir William Rumbold, two partners of the mercantile firm, the failure of which made so much noise ten or twelve years ago. I haven't the time to tell you how they were bullied and ill-treated by the Company's Government. Whether their claims will be settled or not is very doubtful. I hope they may succeed.'

Palmer never ceased to pursue his claims for the enormous sum which he maintained to be rightly due to him. With these claims Taylor warmly sympathized, so much so that his anticipations about a new Governor-General of India were affected by the consideration of his probable attitude to the Palmer demands. Quite apart from these claims, it is obvious that Palmer was a centre of intrigue both in the city of Hyderabad and in the circles that surrounded the Residency. Although he failed to be a trustworthy custodian of Taylor's scanty savings, he exercised over his son-in-law, as Taylor himself states in his autobiography, a complete fascination, and was always his consultant and adviser. Taylor tells us that he was constantly at Palmer's house in 1826, and he probably made the acquaintance of the Palmer family earlier, on his arrival at Aurungabad. It is a curious fact that we learn as much about the daughter of William Palmer who married Meadows Taylor from two chance references in the writings of persons unconnected with her, as from Taylor's autobiography and the letters in this book. At a date apparently in 1824 John D'Ewes, a subaltern in the Madras army, came to Aurungabad with his regiment. In a book<sup>1</sup> published many years afterwards he tells us that Mr. William Palmer then resided in

<sup>1</sup> *Sporting Adventures in Many Lands*, p. 67.

a magnificent bungalow at Aurungabad with his daughter, a very accomplished young lady, just returned from England, and that he was celebrated for his splendid and profuse liberality. Although Mary Palmer, afterwards Mrs. Meadows Taylor, must then have been only about sixteen years of age, there can be no doubt that she was the daughter in question. The last survivor of her brothers and sisters, Mrs. Fallon, stated definitely that Mary was the eldest child, and there is no mention in any record of the family of any other daughter to whom the description could apply. This is the only information we have that Mrs. Taylor visited Europe before she accompanied her husband on his furlough. The probability of her education in England is supported by the fact that two of her brothers were at school there (and were drawing stipends from the Nizam's Government) in 1822.

The second outside reference is to be found in the unpublished letters of Colonel (later Major-General) M. E. Bagnold of the Bombay army to his wife. These letters, written when Colonel Bagnold was commanding the Aurungabad brigade, were not intended for any eyes except those of the recipient. As will appear from the passages quoted later regarding General Fraser, they were written to amuse in a vivid, if caustic, strain. Writing on 22 August 1843 to tell of an unusual event, a ball at the Hyderabad Residency, he says: "The Lionesses (i.e. after the Lady Nell Gwynne [a nickname]) were Mrs. xxx and the little Indian queen, Mrs. Meadows Taylor, smaller and blacker than ever." It may be assumed from this description that Mrs. Taylor was well able to hold her

own in Hyderabad society at a time when, as the letters in this book show, her health was impaired. It may be noted that, in marked distinction to the grand-looking old Begum, the mother of William Palmer, we know nothing of Mary Palmer's mother. William Palmer in 1848, when he was sixty-eight years old, married a European widow who is in one place described as his third wife. This is, however, the only marriage that is recorded, and the number and ages of his children show that he had many irregular connexions, while, in those cases in which the names of the mothers of the children were recorded, they are either Moslem or Hindu. Whether Mary Meadows Taylor was able fully to share her husband's literary and artistic tastes we do not know. There can, however, be no doubt that Taylor was deeply attached to her, and that he felt her loss poignantly.

Taylor's connexion with William Palmer at least enabled him to acquire an intimate knowledge of phases of Indian life altogether closed to the ordinary European writer. After, as we have seen, several years' acquaintance with her family, he married Mary Palmer at the end of August 1882, a few days before his twenty-fourth birthday. She was some three months older than he was. By this date William Palmer's fortune had disappeared. He still received an allowance of 2,500 rupees a month from the Nizam's Government, which would have been sufficient for most people, but it clearly did not meet the expenses of his large family and his great house or *kothi*.

The next few years were passed by Taylor on regimental duty. They were marked by the deaths of his two eldest children, both of them sons, and by much ill health,

principally due to fever, of his wife and himself. Fortunately the monotony of military life and of long periods of convalescence, and, it must be added, the encouragement and criticism of William Palmer, combined to induce Taylor to complete in 1837 his first and, as it proved, his best-known book, *The Confessions of a Thug*. Shortly afterwards his doctor said to him, 'You must go away; we can do no more,' and in November 1837 he started on three years' furlough. After an adventurous voyage by Arab dhows as far as Egypt, he reached England with his wife. His book had been placed by his cousin Sarah Austin with Richard Bentley the publisher, and its immediate success added greatly to the pleasure of his stay in England. He was commissioned to write his second book, *Tippoo Sultaun*, which was also highly successful though it has failed to last as well as the *Confessions*. Taylor left England in November 1840 on his return journey to India. From this point the letters in this book begin, and the subsequent events of his life may be treated more briefly. After his arrival he did regimental duty for a time but was then selected by the Resident, General Fraser, to take charge of Shorapur, a feudatory state under the suzerainty of the Nizam's Government. Here he established order and brought up the infant Raja whose authority and life were threatened by many dangers. It is unnecessary at this point to do more than mention the death of his wife in 1844. Taylor remained at Shorapur till 1853, when he received the distinction of being selected by the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie (the Resident having constantly recommended him for such a charge), to administer one of the districts ceded,

in this case temporarily, to the Indian Government by the Nizam. Here he remained till in 1857 he was transferred, in the critical circumstances of the Bengal army's mutiny, to the charge of one of the Berar districts, which had also been ceded, in this instance permanently, by the Nizam. In 1858 Taylor's former protégé, the Raja of Shorapur, was so misguided as to participate in the already dying mutiny. Taylor was deputed to the state, but by the time of his arrival the rebellion had been broken and the Raja was in custody. A few days afterwards the latter managed to shoot himself, possibly, as Taylor thought, by accident. Taylor was left in charge of Shorapur and of another district. His health had now broken down and in 1860 he was obliged to take leave from which, it was obvious, he could not return to duty. His life in England was largely occupied, often in indifferent health, in literary work. In 1875 he was cordially invited to re-visit Hyderabad by the famous Minister, Sir Salar Jung. His visit was, however, marred by extreme ill health, and he returned only to die at Mentone on 13 May 1876.

Something may be said of the recipient of these letters, and of the manner in which they were written and have been preserved.

Henry Reeve (1813-95) was a second cousin of Meadows Taylor, and five years his junior. It is unlikely that they knew each other well, if at all, until Taylor came on furlough in 1838, but their friendship was henceforth abiding. Appointed Clerk to the Privy Council at an early age, Reeve was also from 1840 to 1855 a principal leader writer on *The Times*, and may be said almost to



have directed its foreign policy. His nickname of 'Il Pomposo' may be some indication of his manner, but his influence was remarkable. He appears to have corresponded regularly with Taylor from 1840 till the latter left India, and the collection of letters which forms the subject of this book, covering the period till 1849, must have been a part only of the correspondence. Even in this set of letters, some are obviously missing. One of those preserved has evidently been marked and cut up for the printers of *The Times*, and returned from the press. Probably others were similarly used and were too mutilated for preservation.

As regards the deciphering of the letters, Taylor's own writing is clear enough. Like most Indian correspondents, however, in those days of high postage rates, he wrote on the thinnest of paper, crossed his sheets without compunction, and used any blank corner for adding postscripts. He had, moreover, a fine disregard for punctuation and capital letters. He used also vernacular and technical terms with a freedom that must have been meaningless to his correspondent in England.

It is perhaps surprising that Taylor, living in remote places, with few opportunities of meeting men of importance, and far distant from centres in British India, should have been for thirteen years, from 1841 to 1853, the Indian correspondent of *The Times*. Probably he obtained the post through the influence of Reeve, though this is nowhere stated. He was doubtless a shrewd commentator who could assess his news clearly. He does not, moreover, appear to have received any fixed salary, and *The Times* had an additional correspondent in Bombay

and perhaps elsewhere. As communications improved information was conveyed more rapidly; and it was the increasing impossibility of being up to date that led to Taylor's resignation of the post in 1858.

The connexion with *The Times* was not the only way in which Reeve was of assistance to Taylor. The former's many literary friends included John Stuart Mill the philosopher, at this period Examiner or Political Secretary to the East India Company. Taylor obviously knew that Reeve showed his letters to Mill, and it appears from the preface contributed by Reeve to the posthumous publication of Taylor's autobiography that Mill approved of his work, and regarded himself as instrumental in saving him from the threatened hardship of removal from his post at Shorapur.

It may further seem strange to the present-day reader that an officer, nominally in the service of an Indian ruler, but actually working almost directly under the orders of the Government of India, should have been the correspondent of an English paper, and should in that capacity have criticized more than one Governor-General in a manner so unrestrained as evidently to have roused both Reeve and Delane, the editor of *The Times*, to protest. It is true that Reeve advised Taylor to keep concealed the place from which he wrote and that, in the letter which has obviously been used for printing, Reeve himself has altered the heading to make it appear to emanate from Poona. But it would seem that Taylor's connexion with *The Times* was well known, at least in Bombay and to the Resident. At this period, however, many officers in India wrote for the Press, often in criti-

cism of the action of the Government. A striking example of this was Henry Lawrence whose undoubted high-mindedness did not prevent his wielding an almost virulent pen. Towards the end of the period covered by these letters, the abuse, for such it had become, was checked by positive orders. Taylor's position, however, as correspondent of a great paper, does not seem to have been regarded as anything remarkable.

General Fraser is so constantly mentioned throughout the letters that something may be said about Taylor's attitude to him. Fraser seems to have treated Taylor with invariable consideration. He lost no opportunity of praising his work. He was responsible for Taylor getting the chance of his life at Shorapur, of which such good use was made, and recommended him for the larger administrative sphere to which Taylor ultimately attained, though after Fraser's departure. In these letters Taylor occasionally refers to Fraser in fairly complimentary terms. Yet, on the whole, his attitude (he is more kindly in his autobiography) is critical and depreciatory. This attitude may be in part attributable to the influence of William Palmer. We have seen that Palmer pressed with unwearied persistence his claims against the Nizam's Government. Fraser clearly lent no support to these claims, and there are references in Hastings Fraser's lengthy memoir of his father which indicate the Resident's opinion of Palmer's propensity for intrigue. Moreover, Fraser thought highly of another local banker, Henry Dighton, and pressed for his being employed in the Nizam's administration. Dighton had originally been an assistant in Palmer's firm and had afterwards started a

rival business. Taylor's opinion of Dighton will appear sufficiently in these letters, and may be assumed to reflect Palmer's view. It is not likely, therefore, that Palmer regarded Fraser with any high degree of approval.

It is, however, fair to Taylor to note that Fraser had certain defects which are much more unkindly emphasized in Colonel Bagnold's letters to his wife than in anything which Taylor ever wrote. One pen picture of Bagnold's may be quoted:

'Fancy, if you can, an old dried up stick of a man, dressed in blue military frock and aiguillettes, buttoned up to the top. His face pale and meagre, thin and sharp: the nose straight and projecting, eyes sunk and narrow forehead retreating back and ending in a large animal club behind: a dancing tripping gait as if about to meet a friend, head and chest thrown forward, a pair of little twinkling grey eyes, one hand advanced, or rubbing both together, and you have his picture. An incessant speaker, but one in whom I see much affectation, his speech being rapid, voluble, and tending to fine hair-drawn points of definition: a man of talent undoubtedly: but his mind, put into too great a rapidity of action, more like an Irishman than a Scotsman, seems to confuse his judgment: is rapid in thought but fussy, tedious and prolix in argument.'

Again Bagnold writes:

'Strange unaccountable character! His information is good and his original judgment, would he act upon it, but he seems to toss and turn about till at last he loses confidence and acts grown.'

And again:

'I look on him as an eel in a basket without sand.'

In another letter,

'I have seen the end of my fight with Newman Noggs.' [Bagnold, very fond of giving nicknames, applies this one constantly to the Resident, doubtless from his likeness to that character in *Nicholas Nickleby*.] 'Our Resident makes a sad fuss about every little business. I really think the Minister is hoodwinking him while he proposes some little political manoeuvre. Oh that the Governor General would send him to manage Shah Shooja.'<sup>1</sup>

This tendency to fussiness was marked by another and more formidable critic, the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie. In a letter dated 25 March 1850 he writes:

'There have been plundering parties of a few hundred men in the Berar of the Nizam's territories. General Fraser makes mountains of these molehills, sends me more official papers on the march of a Subadar's party of the Contingent than were produced by the Battle of Waterloo, and dins into the Government day by day with provoking pertinacity his own remedy, the assumption of government by us, that is, by himself.'

There is, of course, a good deal to be said on the other side in Fraser's favour. We find so severe a critic as Mrs. Colin Mackenzie in her *Storms and Sunshine of a Soldier's Life* speaking of him as 'accomplished and high spirited', although she complains that he sometimes wrote to her husband, a Brigadier, 'as if he were addressing a presumptuous young gentleman who had no right to express his opinions'. The case for Fraser is most fully set out in the pious memoir written by his son. A more impartial view may be quoted from the *Memories of Surgeon-General Maclean*.

<sup>1</sup> The puppet ruler placed by the Indian Government on the Afghan throne.

'The Resident was a well bred and high minded gentleman, and a notable personage. His manners were sprightly and even gay, in some respects more those of a Frenchman than an Englishman. He spoke French perfectly and had perhaps the best private library in India. There was no doubt about his being a man of culture, but not the same unanimity of opinion about his merits as the political representative of Government. In his quarrels with Lord Dalhousie he maintained his opinion with great ability and independence.'

In judging Fraser's character the conditions of his service should be remembered. When appointed Resident at Hyderabad he was fifty-five years old, the age subsequently regarded as the limit for an officer's usefulness in India. Yet he remained at Hyderabad for fourteen years and even then, according to Briggs, 'was bullied out of it by Lord Dalhousie'. Still more striking to modern ideas is the fact that, when in 1848 he was obliged by the ill health of a daughter to apply for six months' leave it was 'for the first and only time in fifty years' service'. This service included several campaigns in the field, and, still more conducive to eccentricity of character, long residence in lonely political posts.

Allowance must also be made for the difficulty of his position. On the one hand, the Government of India was pledged to the principle of non-interference, and any action by the Resident was resented by the Ruler of the State. On the other, the Resident was expected to keep the Ruler to his treaty obligations, and to prevent entire disorder. The policy of Government, however well-intentioned, too often resulted in such chaos that intervention became inevitable. The State was then absorbed, as in the case of Oudh, or territory was alienated to the

Indian Government to provide funds for the support of the contingent of troops required to maintain order, and to fulfil the treaty obligations to which the State was pledged. Thus several districts were taken from Hyderabad immediately after Fraser's departure. Some of them were restored as a recognition of the loyalty of the State during the mutiny of the Bengal army: but the Berars have been alienated beyond possibility of return. The policy which Fraser advocated was earlier intervention and the administration of districts by British officers on behalf of the Nizam till affairs were put in order, when the districts could be handed back to the administration of the State officials. However unwelcome such intervention might have been, the ruler would have preferred it in the long run to the policy actually followed.

In dealing with the life of Meadows Taylor, a reference may perhaps be made to the title of colonel which was often attached to him after his retirement and has been generally applied since his death, even in Bruce's careful edition of the autobiography. The highest rank to which a local officer of the Nizam's Service could attain was that of major, and only three reached it. For the remainder the highest rank was that of captain-commandant. Taylor reached that rank in 1843 and still held it when the local officers remaining in service were pensioned in 1853. Taylor was among them though he did not draw his pension so long as he held the civil appointment in which he continued till his retirement. There is nothing to indicate that he was ever officially given any higher military rank. This would indeed have been impossible as he was at no time a member of the Queen's or

Company's forces. The fact that he was gazetted in 1869<sup>1</sup> a Companion of the Order of the Star of India under the designation of captain amounts to proof positive that no such promotion was ever made. There is no evidence that Taylor ever described himself as colonel. No military rank is given him on the title-page of his *Manual of Indian History*. Of the two books on Indian Architecture and Views which were published in 1866, he is described on the title-page of one as colonel, and of the other as captain. He must, however, have acquiesced in the application to him of the higher rank by others. There were other instances of the same usage among the old officers of the Nizam's Local Service. They, or their friends, doubtless considered that their long and honourable service entitled them to a higher designation than that of captain, especially as they had been assured that they would be treated in the same way as officers of the Company's Service. They remembered, perhaps, that some officers of the Madras army who had served with the Nizam's force had in 1854 been given the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel some years after their retirement. It may be observed that both General Sir Le Grand Jacob, in his correspondence with Henry Reeve in 1877, and General C. R. S. Hervey, in his book published in 1892, refer to Meadows Taylor as colonel, though one would assume that they were aware of his official rank.

There can be no question of the high standard of Taylor's work and of his devotion to duty. It is the more unfortunate that the latest mention of him in Anglo-Indian literature should be offensive and clearly incorrect.

<sup>1</sup> *London Gazette*, 4 June 1869.



A talented young member of the Indian Civil Service, who died untimely after writing some striking works of fiction, unfortunately borrowed from his father's reminiscences in what purported to be a serious work.<sup>1</sup> In his mention of Meadows Taylor he starts by confusing Shorapur with the Bombay district of Sholapur, an astonishing mistake in one who professes to quote from Taylor's autobiography. He states that Taylor enjoyed his visits to England and liked to gratify the ladies with new and ever stranger stories of India. In point of fact Taylor only visited England once in thirty-six years' service. The writer continues: 'But he was happy to be back again in his kingdom, surrounded by his subjects and his girls,' and asserts that Taylor relished the various pleasures of a well-stocked harem. The refutation of such scandal is perhaps scarcely necessary: but these letters will add to the evidence of its improbability supplied by the autobiography and by the high estimation in which Taylor was universally held.

The letters, in fact, depict the life of a lonely Englishman a century ago in circumstances that were only alleviated by the value of the work done for the people of the country in whose welfare Taylor was so deeply interested.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to D. Kincaid's *Social Life in India*, p. 160.

## LETTER 1

[This is the only letter written on the journey to India that has been preserved. Reeve was able to use a portion of it for *The Times*.

The question of Egypt was one of the first importance at the time. The rise of Mahomed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, and the military successes of his son Ibrahim in Syria, seemed likely to upset the whole system of the Turkish Empire, and to start a conflagration in which Great Britain and France might well be involved. The former was moreover deeply interested in the question which Waghorn and others were pursuing of the overland route across Egypt and down the Red Sea for Mails and passengers to India, thus reducing the time for the passage to less than two months against the six months which the voyage round the Cape often took. Ibrahim was checked in Syria by Commodore Charles Napier ('Black Charley'), who captured Acre on 4 November 1840, and, appearing with his squadron before Alexandria on 27 November, arranged a convention with the Pasha which provided a solution for the situation.]

*On the Nile. December 21st, 1840*

I promised you a few lines from Egypt, and therefore, though as you see I have no ink, I write to you with pencil, and hope that my dispatch may be legible when it reaches you. Of my proceedings as far as Malta and within sight of Alexandria you may have heard before this can reach you, and, if not, it may suffice to say that we met with nothing remarkable in our travels except dry roads and pleasant weather, which was hardly to be expected in France, and that we stayed 9 days with our good cousins<sup>1</sup> in Marseilles. At Malta we were only two or three hours, and had but just time to put ourselves and our baggage on board the *Liverpool* before she sailed. Our passage to Alexandria was most propitious, and we

arrived there on the 16th, but so late in the evening that we could not get ashore, and, though we threw up many rocket signals in the hope that some one would come off and tell us the news, no body made any attempt to get at us, from which some alarmists thought that all had gone wrong with the negotiations, and that the English fleet had gone somewhere to rendezvous previous to an attack being made; others more wisely that all was quiet, which, as you know, turned out to be the case.—We lay off the port till the morning broke, and then steamed quietly in, so that we had a most excellent view of the whole of the boasted fortifications and preparations for defence. These you may like to know something about, as so much was heard of them in England. I don't know whether you know that the Pacha's<sup>2</sup> palace stands upon the neck of land which jutting out forms the harbour of Alexandria. It was certainly bristling with cannon, and the noble Turkish<sup>3</sup> line of battle ships and double banked frigates drawn up across the mouth of the harbour in a sort of echelon, looked formidable enough; but on closer examination, an officer of the Madras Artillery, a fellow passenger, and self looked at the whole most narrowly and detected a host of weak points, the most glaring of which was that, in the *Eastern* harbour, but very few guns could be brought to bear, nothing in comparison to the batteries of the fleet, and that after the first few broadsides the Pacha's tall and lightly constructed palace must become a heap of ruins. Allowing that matters had reached this crisis, the neck of land would have become an excellent defence to the ships against the fire of the Turkish fleet, whose guns could not by any possibility

have been brought to bear upon the vessels in the Eastern harbour, without the previous destruction of all the buildings and batteries in the Isthmus. You will be able to see on a map the portions I have attended to, and I give a rude sketch from memory of the harbours.

But you will be able to judge better from a map than from my sketch which, now that I have made it, hardly conveys my idea to you. The Pacha must have felt the utter insignificance of Alexandria, in spite of his fleet, very keenly after the destruction of Acre, and must have understood, after he asked Napier for his credentials and was told they were outside, that they would be tolerably persuasive. In short I don't think the place could have stood six hours' fire, if half that, for two batteries that I went into on shore, and I suppose they were samples of the rest, were so slightly constructed that a shot or two in each would have knocked the sandbag parapets all to pieces. The effect of a cannonade would have been awful indeed, for nothing could have saved the whole of the Turkish fleet; they were hardly a ship's length from each other, lying all sorts of ways, but certainly splendid ships to look at, especially the heavy frigates. We were only a few hours in Alexandria, at Hill's hotel, having determined to go on under his charge rather than that of Mr. Waghorn,<sup>4</sup> as he had charge of the mails. We were glad to get a pleasant déjeuner, and were finally in motion again on the Mahamudieh Canal about 4 o'clock. Hill had secured three track boats (towing), and away we started, my boat leading at the rate of 8 miles an hour. Waghorn's party had started previously, but there was no wind and we passed them (to their infinite chagrin) about a mile

from the Canal harbour. We reached Atfé 45 miles about midnight having been delayed here and there a little, and as we were in advance of the Mail I wished to get on and lose no time in selecting my boat for the Nile, but, alas, there was no wind and the whole party was obliged to stay till daylight. A thick fog cleared away at sunrise, and we were sorry to find a contrary wind spring up, in spite of which our people started tracking us up the side of the bank, and this has continued, I am sorry to say, till almost the present time.

About an hour ago the wind came round to the Northwards, and we have a wind right aft, but light as yet. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, three long days have we been dragged along at the rate of a mile and a half an hour, getting here and there a slant of wind which has enabled us altogether to make about 70 miles out of the 150. Our party has kept company very well, and we have often been in front of the mail for miles together. Just now the mail is before us, but within sight in one of the noble reaches of this noble river. What a river it is! In most parts half a mile wide, and deep enough for heavy boats almost anywhere. In spite of contrary winds the weather has been most deliciously cool, and we have been tired of looking at the endless succession of views up the river, monotonous perhaps, but still presenting many features for admiration. The inundations of the Nile have been most destructive this year, and villages have been swept away of which no traces remain but the mounds on which they stood, and a few crumbling walls. Many of these upon the banks looked very desolate, and, as the mud is not half dried, all is most uncomfortable in them; how-

ever, as the best houses are all mud, they are soon erected again. The people appear very poor, and a very intelligent man, a partner of Mr. Hill, who is on board our boat, says that it is distressing to travel through the country and compare it with the state it was in 14 years ago, when in every village there were large granaries and stacks of corn. The people were well clothed, the women wore ornaments, and provisions were one half cheaper than at present and you saw young able men working in the fields and about the villages. Now, there is nothing to be seen but the villages, much more ruined than in those days, old men only, and boys in the fields, and more women and children than, as my informant expressed himself, is good for the population.<sup>5</sup>

As we have advanced I think the villages look better, but the people I fancy are poorer than they were two years and a half ago. This is not to be wondered at when one thinks that the poor cultivators get but little money for their produce, all being taken by the Pacha's officers, and tiskerries<sup>6</sup> or orders on the treasuries given. These are discounted by the Jews and Armenian shroffs, at of course exorbitant rates. All seem to be glad of the Pacha's submission to the English, and look to the complete establishment of our influence, the French having most materially declined. They are, so Mr. Reynolds, my host on board, tells me, often derided at Alexandria, as people who have boasted much to the Pacha of what they cannot perform, and reviled as the cause of the national discredit. Be this as it may, it is pretty certain that they are not in favour, and from what I have heard must have given themselves great airs previous to the taking of

St. Jean d'Acre. There have been some disturbances and robberies in the desert, and we are to cross to Suez, mails and passengers together, under an escort of the Pacha's cavalry from Cairo. This was kindly granted by the old man when he was informed of the arrival of so many passengers in the *Liverpool* which, I am told, gratified him as a mark of confidence he had not expected, for many were almost in favour of a bombardment of Alexandria when the *Liverpool* sailed. We are therefore sure of arriving in time for the steamer at Suez.

We have a sufficient number of most active tormentors which keep us awake at night, but these are common to excursions on the Nile, and, though requiring much philosophic endurance, cannot be avoided. The delay from contrary winds has been worse to endure than anything else, and it is difficult to make up our minds to a six days' sojourn on board a boat when one was assured it would at most be 24 hours. Our boat is fortunately a large one with two good cabins and a deck, I would say, 12 feet wide, and as long from the cabin door to the mainmast. One who has all London to walk about in may think this very small, but it is large enough for all purposes as you will say when you come to Egypt, for I am persuaded you will come sooner or later. I hope we may have a few hours in Cairo, for though I have been there I have not seen it, at my last visit I was blind.<sup>7</sup> Nor have I even seen the outline of the Pyramids; it would be strange enough if by arriving at night I was to miss even that! It is as you may suppose much warmer than the Mediterranean, nevertheless I am dressed in woollen clothes and am not too hot in the shade. The sun is powerful to-day, but

this is the first heat we have felt, and the air is delicious. Yesterday was a July day of England.

<sup>1</sup> The family of Philip Taylor (1786-1870), first cousin of Meadows Taylor's father.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Ali (1769-1849), the founder of the ruling dynasty in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> The Turkish fleet had voluntarily joined Muhammad Ali in 1839.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Waghorn (1800-50), the indefatigable pioneer of the Overland route to India.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Ali had done much for the extension of cultivation in Egypt, but the heavy burden of conscription for his numerous wars, and the enactions of the subordinate officials which he was unable to control, had by this date caused a marked deterioration in the condition of the country.

<sup>6</sup> *taskaris*, i.e. bills, or orders to pay.

<sup>7</sup> When Taylor passed through Egypt on his way from India in 1838, he was suffering severely from ophthalmia (*Life*, p. 114).

## LETTER 2

[As this is the first letter from India, it is necessary to explain the political conditions about which Taylor was to write so frequently. It was the time of a lull in the Afghan Campaign. Shah Shuja, the puppet king of Lord Auckland's disastrous policy, had been placed on the throne, and his predecessor Dost Mahomed was in India in honourable confinement. It was, however, obvious that Shah Shuja was maintained only by British bayonets, and the Directors of the East India Company were horrified at the expense involved. Within India the death of Maharaja Ranjitsingh, the Ruler of the Punjab, had deprived the Government of India of a prudent ally who was faithful to his obligations. The whole of the Punjab was in confusion and at the mercy of an unruly Army. War already appeared inevitable in the near future.]

*Hyderabad: 24: March 1841*

Although I transgress all sorts of Doctor's orders and my eyes are dim and aching, I have found a dark corner of the house and proceed to write you a dull letter in



answer to yours of 30th January which reached me on the 19th with a welcome budget of other letters from various folks at home. I have had a nasty chronic kind of ophthalmia for a long time, which, though my eyes had been previously weak, attacked me first severely between Poona and Sholapoor on my way up here, and as we were in tents I could get no shade for them and this increased the disorder. Sometimes my eyes would get better, and lead me to imagine I was going to lose my enemy. Again they would become worse, and the matter has ended by the inflammation settling in my eyelids, which annoy me more than I can tell you. I am thankful to say however that I am very much better, and the Doctor gives hope of speedy recovery if I don't use my eyes. I have not then been able to read the papers, indeed I saw none for a whole month while we were travelling between this and Bombay. I have been to all intents flat stale and unprofitable, moping in dark corners by day and owl-like venturing forth only at night. It is wrong to grudge the time so lost, for perhaps it has saved me painful suffering but it has prevented me from applying myself to gain that knowledge of passing political events, which might be interesting to you.

The state of the Punjab occupies the attention of every one, and as far as I can ascertain the Government of India is watching its opportunity for direct interference, a large force having been assembled on the frontier and preparations made elsewhere for reinforcement to it when necessary. Shere Singh<sup>1</sup> who succeeded to the Musnud is a weak and dissolute fellow with no control over his large army, which in consequence does just as it pleases, and has com-

mitted violent excesses within its own territory. It is said that the army dislike us and long to measure swords with us, that there are many fanatic leaders among its officers, who talk openly of a crusade against the British power, and the establishment of the Sikh dynasty throughout India. Shere Singh, who makes professions of friendship but is believed to be inimical at heart, has apparently lent himself to the views of his already unmanageable army, and a recent levy of 10,000 men has been the consequence. This state of things cannot long continue, and a tragedy which happened just a month ago, may hasten the catastrophe. The Ranee Chand Koor, the mother of the Princess who is enceinte, has been in a kind of honourable confinement with her daughter for some time in the fort of Lahore. In the same place was also confined Lalla Takee Chund, formerly the Commandant of the fort of Futtehghurh, for having sided with the Ranee against Shere Singh. By some means it was suspected that Takee Chund had an illicit intercourse with Ranee Chund Koor, and a number of the Sirdars of the court instigated by Shere Singh attacked Takee Chund in his apartments and cut him to pieces. The Ranee hearing of their intention rushed to the scene, and in the endeavour to protect Takee Chund, has received some very desperate wounds, by which her life is endangered, nay despaired of. If she dies the British Govt. may possibly demand her murderers, for there is little doubt that she offered as much as six annas in the rupee upon the whole Sikh revenue, for the establishment upon the Musnud of the child of her daughter should it prove a son, an answer to which proposal she was anxiously expecting. Altogether these

affairs are running into a pleasant state of confusion which according to the usual system of Indian diplomacy can only be arranged by the sword. I should not regret to see the Sikh power at an end, upon any honest ground of quarrel, for such an army beyond the control of its ruler, is dangerous to the general peace of India and a nucleus for all disaffected persons, and I should like to see a fair share of the Sikh territory in our hands, because with that our Affghanistan conquests would be really valuable. As matters stand at present, they are of little use, the Russian Bugaboo having been frightened away, and the news from there is only a repetition of the old stories of tribe after tribe of hardy mountaineers being soundly thrashed, becoming very humble for the time and when they have recovered their wind getting up and fighting as hard as ever. I am sorry to tell you of another reverse<sup>3</sup> in that quarter, a strong detachment of the Bombay Army, 800 Infantry, some Cavalry, a wing of a regiment I believe, were sent against a fort wherein were some Chiefs who refused to pay the tribute due to Shah Sooja-ool-Moolk; after some sharp fighting the place was found too strong and the force retired for reinforcements with the loss of 3 officers killed, several wounded, and about 40 rank and file. I suppose the next news we have will be of the capture of the fort, but these reverses at petty places ought not to be, they sound badly even here; and it ought never to be lost sight of by officers commanding in that warfare, that it is far better to overestimate the enemy's strength than to think lightly of it. There have been several of these reverses and the general state of our occupancy of the country, shows that it is only

done at the sword's point. It is a pity the Affghans cannot be disciplined, or even prevailed to enter our own service, but at present they seem to have lost none of that proud clannish spirit which has enabled them to oppose us so gallantly. Rumour states a Russian army to be marching upon Herat, the fortifications of which are in a bad state, this too at the invitation of the ruler. News from there is anxiously looked for and may arrive at Bombay before the Mail leaves. The only thing I see, which is confirmatory of the apprehended war with the Sikhs is that Colonel<sup>3</sup> Lumley, Adjut General of the Bengal Army, has set off from Calcutta by *Dawk* post for Ferozepoor, where he is to command the force destined perhaps to measure swords with the Sikhs. It is said he is an excellent officer, and a man holding such a situation would hardly be sent from his staff duties without urgent necessity.<sup>4</sup>

I am very glad that you received my pencil letter from Egypt, and more so that it was legible. I found it would rub out but I had no ink, yet needs must write, and I am much gratified that you found any worth printing. As I promised, whenever I can organise my forces, you shall have whatever I can glean regarding passing events, and the condition of the country. On my way up rapid marches and travelling twice a day with a tent full of high spirited children (the young Turtens<sup>5</sup> with their mother who were our fellow passengers from Suez, and not being able to get round to Calcutta by sea, accompanied us to this place, and went on to Masulipatam on the coast) afforded me no opportunities of making enquiries into the state of the police of the Company's territories. Here and there I heard enough to make me

sure that the whole system was most wretched, that gang robberies and organised crime existed and could not be checked, and that the Collectors and Magistrates have far too much to do, to attend to it at all!! As soon as I am settled I shall seek about for information but it will be long I am afraid before I can get at facts enough to publish a true account of the system. I will do what I can however. For a month or two to come I shall be unsettled, for our travels are not at an end. We have yet to go 200 miles, for I have been appointed to the charge of<sup>6</sup> a regiment of which the Commandant is in England on leave, and the officer in charge junior to me, he must therefore give way. The allowances will be about a thousand Rupees a month, which is better than I expected when I left England. I daresay I shall hold the command for a year. This is the result of no favour but what my position in the service entitles me to. I sent all my letters to Lord Auckland to Calcutta as soon as I arrived at Bombay, and received a civil reply to my letter from his Secretary, Colvin.<sup>7</sup> It was to the effect, I forget the exact words, that Lord A was obliged to me for the letters, and 'that my character and rank in the service fully entitled me to hold such situations as I might justly aspire to fill'. Whether this was meant as an opening to ask for anything I know not, but I shall certainly try his Lordship whenever I have an opportunity. Nothing offers just now, but I have some hope of a matter which I tell to you in confidence and beg you not to mention again. I do not even allude to it to my Father. It is possible<sup>8</sup> to get the charge and collection of revenue of large districts under the Nizam's Government. A Mr. Dighton has the collection

of about 20 lacs of revenue and the charge of the country which yields it. The Government gives  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for the trouble and expense of collection, which on a large amount is a noble thing, and what I covet very much. Some overtures have been made to me to take charge of districts yielding from 40 to 50 lacs, but as yet I do not know whether they are in earnest or no. If I can come to a settlement I will resign the service but should infinitely prefer getting Lord Auckland's sanction to the measure, which would make my position very firm. The thing is dazzling, perhaps too much so, but I am as good as Dighton any day. He is not an honest man, and will be found out ere long, but he has the support of the Resident, and is *therefore* the friend of the Minister. I daresay I shall have to write, to aid W. P. and Co about this man. Did I ever mention him to you? I would take 20 lacs or even ten permanently, for one does not only make one's  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, or two thirds of it, but can lend one's money to the Nizam's Government at 12 or 18 per cent, the common prevailing rates. In fact the profit to be realised honestly and fairly is very considerable and the employment, though severe labour, would suit me far better than playing at soldiers, which does for the Emperor of Russia and German Princes very well, and is pleasant enough when on a large scale.

We had a delightful march up here, the weather was pleasant, and we got on famously with the Turtons. They were from all ages from 14 down to 1, and nine in number, of whom four rode on horseback, four went in a sort of van, and one with Mrs. T. The eldest, Alice,<sup>9</sup> is a glorious creature, very beautiful, after my fancy at

least, parts of her face very much reminding me of Carry, but very much smaller, and more *spirituel*. She was a delightful companion for though so young she had no Missyness about her, and had seen Canada, Italy, and France, with eyes. She used to tell of Charles Buller, and Arthur also, who may remember her in Canada perhaps in London. Turton's thanks for our care of them all, knew no bounds; and I am sure, if he can help me, that I have the good will of his wife and children to make him exert himself. He is I believe intimate with Lord Auckland, and has on many occasions assisted the Palmer cause with his Lordship. I went on 30 miles with the Turtons towards Masulipatam the first day, and left them with very great regret. We had been constant companions all the way from Suez and had lived as one family. I shall long remember our pleasant march and very sweet companion, so young, yet so intelligent beyond her years. I used to fancy their characters alike, and I wish my child may be like her.

There is a young artist here whose name is Lewis, who paints indifferent portraits in oil, and has made clever sketches in Persia, the best of which he says he has sent to Lord Lansdowne for whom they were made. He came from Persia to Bombay where he ran off with a Barrister's wife, was cast in damages and into prison, and, when he could get out, he came here to make money. In this he has succeeded, having received some say more than 20,000 Rupees for Portraits within the year. If he can do this why should not poor Weld,<sup>10</sup> who by his own account is poor indeed having no commissions, he tells me? Now his portraits are better than Lewis's, and if he

could be sent out to sketch, he would do well here. £200 would be enough for him, which he could repay in sketches, and I am sure he would be industrious. Can you give him any lift in the matter by mentioning him to Lord Lansdowne? Weld should not come out before October next, so that there is plenty of time. If I had the money I would send it to him, but I have not, and my exchequer is likely to be low for some time. One thing is certain, that if Weld was here, he could not starve, which might be the case or next door to it in England. A travelling commission of ever so small an amount would give him importance, and assist him from its certainty. At every station he would find people who wish to be painted, and when Hyderabad was exhausted he could go elsewhere. I am anxious about Weld in consequence of his last letter and therefore write as I do to you. Pray therefore forgive me. The success of *Tippoo*<sup>11</sup> is very flattering and gratifying and I thank you for the copy of the *Spectator*, the review in which gives me some good advice which I shall try to follow. It is pleasant to see oneself praised, and so great a Don as Ainsworth soundly abused in the same page. If painstaking can effect it my next shall be better than this, but I have begun nothing yet, nor am likely to do so till the days and nights are cooler. Please remember me kindly at Gore House.<sup>12</sup> I made a promise of writing to the Count, which I will perform when I have better eyes. I want them now for those I care more about. I should like much to know her Ladyship's opinion of *Tippoo* and perhaps you will mention it to me if you hear it. Do you like it as well as the *Thug*? What says Carry who commended the other with



all her might and main? I dont know how you will find this for I have, written it amidst many interruptions and often with pain but I send it rather than none. My wife begs her kindest remembrances, and with my love to Carry believe me ever sincerely yours

25th. I have had a deliberation as to whether I should send this half sheet as cover, or scribble over the whole. It has ended in the latter which will cost you an extra shilling and perhaps more, but the truth is that the papers of yesterday contain news which I must write to you. The first is that a large Persian force is marching upon Herat, and that the officers there Col. Todd,<sup>13</sup> Dr. Login and Mr. North had quitted it. Yar Mahomed was with the force, the man who accompanied Capt. Outram in his chase of Dost Mahomed and misled him; he is said to be an arrant scoundrel. We shall anxiously therefore look for a confirmation of this news, or I should rather say for particulars of the amount of the Persian force. I suppose, if Herat is attacked, that we shall declare war against Persia which would be pretty pastime with the turbulent Sikhs in our rear, very ready to intercept convoys and amuse themselves with whatever they could pick up. It is clear they must be knocked on the head first, therefore, to prepare a clear road for the advance. Letters full of mischief and intrigue are said to have been intercepted from our worthy ally and dependant Shah Soojah, written, it is broadly stated, to the Persians and others. I can hardly credit this but letters from Affghanistan positively state it. If this be the case I suppose his deposition will follow

and that would be matter of regret to no one, except for the money and blood it has cost to place so despicable a rascal on the throne. I should hope in event of this that Dost Mahomed would be taken into favour for he is a fine fellow, and has gained by his conduct through the war a good character among those who have been opposed to him. He is now on his way down to Calcutta, where all are prepared to give him a hearty welcome, and this would, one would hope, have the effect of attaching him to us permanently. At Lahore Shere Singh has after the old Turkish fashion been beheading some of his Sirdars who had espoused the cause of Chund Koowar, the lady whom I mentioned as having been cut down; others who were there had fled for their lives, General Court<sup>14</sup> being one of the number. There is no news of the wounded lady, but if she dies her daughter's position as a prisoner, under a man who dreads the issue of her confinement, can hardly be safe or pleasant. It would not be extraordinary if she were to place herself under British authority. The force to be assembled at Ferozepoor or on the frontier is mentioned in detail; it consists of 20 Regiments of all arms, a large proportion of whom are Europeans. It is to consist, in part, of 4 Native Infantry Regiments, 4 Regiments' Native Cavalry, 3 Regiments European Infantry, 2 Regiments European Cavalry, 4 Troops Horse Artillery, 2 Battalions foot artillery. This ought to be enough to settle the Punjabees, for the Sikh army, the discipline of which was never very famous, is divided into various factions, and, on an attack, being made by us, would most probably split into parties under favourite leaders and be beaten in detail. Besides we have experience to teach us

that so called disciplined native armies are more certainly beaten than undisciplined ones; they are tempted to stand the result of a general engagement, and are then utterly disorganized. Inshalla! this will be the case now. The only question is where is the money for all this to come from. Will the independent princes be asked to contribute money instead of troops for the general good of the state? I think it will come to this ere very long if the war continues.

I need hardly say don't give implicit credence to the Persian movement, or to Shah Soojah's treacherous correspondence. If true, we shall have confirmation which will be beyond doubt. Yet it is rather odd that news of both should have been published at Calcutta and Bombay from different sources. Kamran<sup>15</sup> is said by all the people here to be completely led by his Minister who is attached to the Persians, so much so as to have no will of his own. They account for the Persian movement in this way.

<sup>1</sup> Sher Singh, a reputed, though almost certainly not a real, son of Ranjitsingh. On the death of the imbecile Kharak Singh, the son and successor of Ranjitsingh, followed by the death in suspicious circumstances, of Kharak's son Nao Nihal Singh, Sher Singh had nominally succeeded to the throne or *masnad*. But he had a formidable rival in Chand Kunwar, here called Chand Koor, Kharak Singh's widow.

<sup>2</sup> This alludes to a petty but unfortunate reverse experienced on 20 February 1841 against the fortified village of Kojak in Baluchistan.

<sup>3</sup> Lumley: Major-Gen. Sir James Rutherford Lumley (1773-1846), appointed adjutant-general Bengal Army at the age of 60, and still holding that post when the first Sikh war began.

<sup>4</sup> A portion omitted refers to the first Chinese war of 1840-2, often, though incorrectly, called the Opium War. Although there was little fighting the medical and commissariat arrangements were very defective, and there was an appalling mortality among the European soldiers. Taylor's comments on the war are not based on any personal knowledge, and are therefore omitted in this and subsequent letters.

\* These were the family of Thomas Edward Turton (1790-1854), who succeeded his father as baronet in 1844. He was at this time Registrar of the Supreme Court in Calcutta. It is recorded of him that 'in ability and charm of manner he had few peers in his time', but he was afterwards involved in serious financial difficulties in respect of sums entrusted to his charge, and was the subject of some of the strongest of Lord Dalhousie's minutes. As the mother of these children was the sister of Turton's first wife, his sons by her could not succeed to the baronetcy. The lady referred to in this letter died shortly after reaching Calcutta.

† The 8th Regiment of the Nizam's infantry.

‡ John Russell Colvin (1807-57), who died as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces during the Indian Mutiny. He was well known to Taylor as he had been Assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad in 1827, and Taylor had worked with him.

§ The hand of William Palmer may be discerned in the dangerous inclination of Taylor to become a revenue farmer of the Nizam. Such a position must, for an honest man like Taylor, have led to disgrace and disaster. The opposition of Palmer to Dighton is also evident. (Richard) Henry Dighton (1799-1854), son of Major-General John Dighton of the Madras army, had, as already noted in the Introduction, joined William Palmer's firm in 1818, but later started a business of his own. According to a family memoir 'he made name and fortune by his own unaided genius and force of character and often in spite of the bitterest opposition which the Company could bring against him'. General Fraser had a high opinion of him and wished to appoint him in charge of certain districts 'in order that he might restore prosperity, while allowing the integrity of the Nizam's territory to continue'. This was vetoed by the Government of India, and another proposal of Fraser's in 1848, that certain districts should be placed under the charge of Dighton, Taylor, and another officer, was only accepted by the Governor-General when the districts were ceded in 1858. At that date, however, Dighton was busy in establishing a bank to finance the Nizam. Ill health obliged his return to England where he died next year. He was certainly a rival in business, and probably also in intrigue, of Palmer; but it is fair to quote Gribble's opinion that he was 'a gentleman of good birth, of strict probity and a favourite with all classes' (*Hist. of the Deccan*, ii. 191).

¶ Alice Trevor Turton (1826-1915) married in 1844 Lieutenant, later Lieutenant-Colonel, John Ouchterlony (1813-63), Madras Engineers. Her father was a member of Lord Durham's Mission to Canada and she had evidently accompanied him. Charles Buller (1806-48) was the drafter of Durham's famous report. Arthur was Charles Buller's brother.

‡ Weld, a younger brother of Meadows Taylor. In spite of his poor

circumstances as an artist in England, he declined the suggestion that he should come to India.

<sup>11</sup> *Tippoo*, i.e. Taylor's second novel *Tippoo Sultaun*. The 'Don' is Harrison Ainsworth, the novelist.

<sup>12</sup> Gore Court, the residence of Lady Blessington (1789-1849), where Taylor had met the Count D'Orsay (1801-52), who had made the drawing of him reproduced in this book.

<sup>13</sup> Major D'Arcy Todd (1808-45), was head of the Mission, Dr. (later Sir John) Login (1809-63), its medical officer, and Lieutenant (afterwards Major-General) C. F. North, Bombay Engineers, an assistant. Yar Mahomed was the minister, and ultimately the murderer, of Kamran Shah, Ruler of Herat. Taylor is mistaken in saying that he accompanied Outram in Afghanistan.

<sup>14</sup> General Court (1798-1868), a Frenchman, perhaps the most respectable of Ranjitsingh's foreign officers.

<sup>15</sup> Kamran Shah, Ruler of Herat, the last of the Sadozai dynasty of Afghanistan. He was murdered in the next year, 1842.

## LETTER 3

[This letter is the only one preserved which shows how Reeve utilized such a communication for *The Times*, cutting it into strips, and striking out portions in red ink. He has even taken the trouble to amend the heading from 'Hingolee' to 'Poonah', doubtless in order to conceal the identity of his correspondent.

This letter supplies the first indication of the parlous situation into which the Government of India had been brought by the foolish policy of Lord Auckland and his Secretaries. No disaster had yet befallen the British arms, but there was constant fighting in Afghanistan and the strain upon the troops and on the finances of India was becoming increasingly evident. The references in this letter to the war in China are omitted, but the mortality among the European troops had affected the available strength in India, and the lucrative trade between the two countries had been greatly impaired. Taylor also refers to a difficulty that was to be repeatedly felt down to and including the war of 1914-18, the paucity of European officers in the Indian regiments, the great need of them when the regiments were on active service and the difficulty in replacing casualties. The Bombay regiments to which he refers had suffered especially from the unhealthiness, due to both fever and heat, of Sind,

Taylor makes no reference to the fact mentioned in his *Life* that he found that the 'little savings' which he had left with his father-in-law, William Palmer, had been 'swept away'. He writes from Hingoli, whither he had gone in temporary command of the 8th Infantry. Hingoli and Ellichpur are large towns in the Nizam's territory which were stations for the troops of his Contingent till the beginning of the present century.]

*Hingolee (deleted in red ink and marked above,  
in red ink, Poonah), 20th April, 1841*

You see we have changed our quarters. We are now two hundred miles from Hyderabad, and having marched that distance in ten days this hot weather is, I assure you, though not railroad speed, very far from despicable work. I wait here a few days only, and then go on to Ellichpoor, to which place I have exchanged with a man who is at present acting as paymaster and staff officer. He wishes to come here as he does not agree with his commanding officer, and takes the charge of the regiment I was appointed to, giving me his own place, which is worth 200 Rupees a month more, 1200 in all, a very comfortable thing if I could keep it. I shall only have it however to the end of the year, when the man<sup>1</sup> who has held the appointment for many years, and who is absent on Furlough, returns from England. I am well content however to hold it till he comes.

Since I wrote last month, the danger apprehended from Persia appears in a great measure to have subsided. We hear that Todd left Herat because more money was demanded from him by Yar Mahomed, with threats of personal consequences if he refused. Yet there is no doubt that Todd has spent 30 lacs of Rupees, £300,000,

during his residency. *Not* on the fortifications for they are still very far from being complete, but in supplying the wants of Yar Mahomed and contributing to his means, it may be, of ultimate annoyance to ourselves. For it is shrewdly suspected that much of the money thus given has gone to Persia where it is much wanted, or has been squandered upon the neighbouring chiefs, among whom Yar Mahomed wishes to strengthen his cause.

This sum, in conjunction with the sudden and unexpected opening of a loan in Calcutta at five per cent, naturally induces one to reflect upon what has been gained in the war, or whether any equivalent appears. The Russian Bugaboo has been frightened away to be sure, but that danger was chimerical in consequence of the events in Europe and Asia, and we have gained what? Some honour and the officers some ribbons and titles, but nothing that is valuable or that can be kept without great and continued outlay. We have the occupation of a territory of little value from which the revenue has to be wrung at the bayonet's point, and we have a hardy and fierce population to deal with, who for the most part appear to hate us bitterly. The authority we have set up ought by this time to stand by itself; but not only does it not do this, but we hear of more war, and fresh demands both for troops and money. Yet to retire would be impossible, without disgrace, and a loss of that reputation which goes so far to keep all quiet at home. It would be better policy, instead of forcing the Affghans to like Shah Soojah, to restore him to his old situation as pensioner, for his unfitness for sovereignty has been proved by a thousand acts, and to set up Dost Mahomed of whom the

Affghans are fond. It may be said that he is not trustworthy but it has yet to be proved whether Shah Soojah is so, and at any rate, as we have possession of the country, the Dost is more likely to be so if we restore him, than he was when in his Durbar England and Russia were contending for his favour, and he was deceived by the specious promises of the latter. As I said the new loan is unexpected, and the advertisement of it had occasioned no little surprise, for it has always been broadly stated, both in England and here, that the resources of the country were fully equal to support the expenses of the Affghan war without a loan, and that if one was required it would rather be negotiated in England at a low rate of interest than here, as high as 5. By so sudden a resort to a loan, the urgency for money must be pressing, and from the contemplated movements in Affghanistan there may be more to spend than has already gone: all future operations must therefore be undertaken upon borrowed capital and that it can be of small amount can hardly be expected, when the enormous forces in movement are taken into consideration. Alas for India! When will her surplus revenue be employed to promote her own interests, education and domestic improvement, instead of to find munitions for distant and unprofitable war! When will they begin to ask the Native States for money? The time perhaps is coming.

There are very sad complaints, with justice, on the great want of officers for the troops employed in the war, especially the native troops, and the necessity of augmentation appears pressing. You know I am not personally interested in this, and that all the augmentations possible



would do me no good. I can therefore write disinterestedly. If you look at the last Quarterly Army List of Bombay there are not 11 officers with any corps in the army who are effective, and some on service in Scinde and elsewhere have hardly more than half this. I do not hesitate to call this disgraceful, yet it is no fault of the Local Government. The *men* of the Native Regiments have been increased to war strength, while the officers have been kept at the peace ratio. This is pitiful economy in a country where the intelligence and confidence of the European officers is far more required than in India, where the Sepoys rely more upon their judgement and discretion, and where their discipline requires to be more carefully attended to, than in their own country. The loss of officers in the Affghan war has been very great, and they have not been replaced, and there is never an affair in which some one is not placed hors de combat. The consequence is that large detachments are entrusted to an officer or two where there should be many. Or they are confided to Natives, who from general ignorance, want of energy and confidence in themselves and their men, no longer continue the same efficient persons they were under their English officers. I know the Sepoys well, and know from experience that so long as the European officer is present all is confidence and harmony. Remove him, and the Native Officer who has sprung from the ranks, no longer has the same reliance in his men that he possessed before, nor his men in him—discipline is neglected in some measure, and in the hour of trial failure is almost positive. There should therefore be no such risk, in Affghanistan especially, nor can there be too many

European officers where there are so many detached duties and convoys requiring strong escorts.

All eyes are directed to the Punjab, where matters are very unsafe and unsettled, the fires smouldering as it were ere they break out. Shere Singh has taken the army under his own immediate command and is, it is said, trying to restrain its excesses; this has provoked the hostility of many of the Sirdars, whose discontent is very openly manifested, while their hatred of the British is expressed not only by words, but by deeds, three English officers<sup>2</sup> in the Sikh army having been murdered there by the last accounts from Peshawar. There is however a gallant force upon the Sikh frontier who are waiting and ready to set on at the least provocation.

The letters by the Steamer (Mail of 1st March) have just arrived here but mine, how tantalizing, are gone round by Hyderabad. I have got Sleeman's report on the success of the measures for the suppression of Thuggee, a new compilation, which I am writing a notice of for the Review.<sup>3</sup> I will send it home next month if I can get it done, in the midst, as I shall be, of settling down. I hope no one will have reviewed it in England before my article gets to you, and it is not probable, for this is an official book, for the use of the department: it is a *jumble*, but I will reduce it to something like order in the article if I can—indeed I hardly know whether it is worth sending or not, but you will be the best judge. I have also written to Calcutta for a published report on the Police of Bengal or of India, I know not which, and hope to get it as that will be worth noticing too.

Todd, I have just seen by the paper is to be removed

from the Agency of Herat, and a man of the name of Lawrence<sup>4</sup> is to be appointed. I know nothing of him, but he had need be a man of firmness and penetration more than ordinary. The report that the Herat Mission is about to return is flatly contradicted, and that of a force marching there gains ground and is violently canvassed in the papers. Ten thousand men are to go if any, and, for the transport of *matériel*, 15,000 camels are wanted. These however are not to be found at present, and indeed, any expedition to Herat, involving as it would do such expense and other momentous considerations would not be undertaken one would think, without very urgent necessity, which ought to be more apparent than it is at present.

I long for a mouthful of your glorious fresh wind more than I can say. We have wind enough, but it is like that of a blast furnace. The heat is tempered however by the use of a Thermantidote, which is a winnowing machine surrounded with wet grass screens, and the temperature is kept down to about 80 degrees which is better than 106 in the shadow outside. The season however is accounted a mild one, for indeed till the last fortnight there has been little *hot* weather. We shall escape some heat, and get upon the hills near Ellichpoor (2400 feet above it) where hot wind is unknown and it is therefore that we are anxious to get on! I am greedy to have more news of *Tippoo*, and to know what says the *Examiner*. The only critiques I have seen are the *Atlas*, *Spectator* and *Times*. Those who have read it here like it better than the *Thug*—so I will try in the next if I can't beat both, it shall be purely Indian.

I send this by way of experiment to the Editor of the *Malta Times* who is agent for the London *Times*. He promised to forward a letter a month for me in the *Times* dispatch, so this will prove his sincerity. Please say how it reaches you. I enclose it to Richardson the Ed. in a letter.

P.S. I have seen the Indian papers since I wrote the last words of my letter. So my Lord Keane is to have 2,000 a year, and this too for three generations. Generous English public, how fully you appreciate the deserts of men who do great deeds, when they are backed by great influence, and have champions like Sir J. Hobhouse!<sup>5</sup> My Lord's supporters have roused the indignation of the Indian press by their sneers, and I am mistaken if we do not see in a short time a series of attacks upon his Lordship which he will find it extremely difficult to parry, and expositions of his doings, which though darkly hinted at before, it would have been wantonness to have made public. Two thousand a year for Gluzni for three generations! Verily the fruits of the war are beginning to show themselves in this and in the new loan opened in Calcutta. In 1838 there were funds sufficient to pay off the old loan of 5 crores (millions sterling), and orders were issued for its payment. These were revoked however, and we see that not only is that all gone, but we must have a new loan of indefinite amount. To help this we have no trade with China except a limited smuggling one in opium, and the fact before us that all the cotton of the last two seasons lies at Macao etc. rotting, it is said, and without the slightest chance of sale.

P.S. 20th.

You will think I am never going to be done with my scraps of paper but I have opened the letter to tell you that I have received yours of February and how much I am obliged to you for it and how grateful I feel to you and to Carry for your care of poor Weld<sup>6</sup> during his illness. Poor fellow he is always a sad sufferer by these attacks of cold, and this seems to have been worse than usual. You will have I hope received my letter about him ere this reaches you, and I shall be very anxious to hear if anything can be done in the matter. I not only think that a warm climate would agree with him, but that he would really maintain himself well.

Your politicals have enough to do, and if the Irish bill is thrown out, which it will be I should think, are we to have the Tories<sup>7</sup> in and a rebellion in Ireland? hardly the latter, perhaps, but a mass of discontent very difficult to satisfy—altogether the times are very interesting, and we shall look very anxiously for the next news from America,<sup>8</sup> peace or war. If war, it will be one of the bitterest on record, and there will be hard blows given and received. Good bye now in earnest for another month. My long letters I daresay bore you, but bear with me, it is a pleasure to talk to you. I hear the *Athenaeum* abuses *Tippoo*, and the notice of the *Thug* was *shabby*. What have I done to offend it? Cannot Chorley<sup>9</sup> carry his thoughts to Mysore? My Salaam to him nonetheless. I am delighted to hear *Tippoo's* success which everyone tells me of. But I wish *you* would tell me its faults, writing honestly. I wish to see the *Athenaeum*, perhaps he is right and the others wrong.

<sup>1</sup> The man was Captain Hugh Robison (c. 1782–1869) of a well-known Edinburgh family.

<sup>2</sup> Two of the three English officers in Sikh employment murdered by their own soldiers were Colonel William Foulkes and Major Matthew Ford.

<sup>3</sup> *The British and Foreign Quarterly Review*.

<sup>4</sup> This may have been Captain George Lawrence, then military secretary at Kabul to Sir William Macnaghten, but is more likely to have been his younger brother, Henry. Neither of them went to Herat.

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Cam Hobhouse (1786–1869), afterwards Lord Broughton, President of the Board of Control 1835–41. The rewards given to Sir John Keane for the capture of Ghazni caused considerable ill feeling. It was perhaps believed that what was undoubtedly a daring *coup de main* had been unduly magnified in order to obtain some glory for the unwise and unpopular Afghan Campaign. A special medal was struck and given to the troops engaged in the storm of the fortress.

<sup>6</sup> Weld, see note on Letter 2.

<sup>7</sup> The Tories under Sir Robert Peel actually came in in September 1841.

<sup>8</sup> This was the period of the Oregon dispute.

<sup>9</sup> Henry Fothergill Chorley (1808–72), at that time on the staff of the *Athenaeum*, who shared rooms with Henry Reeve.

## LETTER 4

[In this letter Taylor refers to the work of the Police in the Company's territories, always a matter in which he was interested, probably because of his early employment as a police officer. The work was at a low point of efficiency at this time, owing to the survival of marauding gangs, the possession of arms by all classes, and especially the preoccupation of the Civil Service with revenue and other administrative duties. The improvement that took place in the next decade is sometimes ascribed to the success of Sir Charles Napier's armed police in Sind. The records of other Provinces show, however, that similar improvement was being effected by strong administrators elsewhere.]

*Ellichpöör, 24th August 1841*

I have three letters of yours to answer though I have not missed a mail. There was none as you know in

August, and you kindly wrote twice in June, hence the accumulation; thank you for them all. I am not an old Indian at all, and therefore can enter fully into the interest of home politics, and am glad to see that there is a hope of a good and able Government.<sup>1</sup> The Whigs were always said to be the champions of improvement and liberal principles, and therefore I liked them, but if the virtue has departed out of them, let them go, and the Tories, if they mean to hold office at all, will hardly do it without entertaining popular measures. I shall look with much anxiety to the result of the elections and the meeting of Parliament not only for the fate of the Ministry but also for the change in our ruler<sup>2</sup> which I suppose will not be delayed. I hope the choice will be for ability and not for interest. It is the habit of all natives to try newcomers, and I have no doubt both Nepal and Lahore will put out their feelers. The former is said to be uneasy, and strong corps of observation are watching silently. The latter is quiet. I suspect Sher Singh to know his own interest far better than he was believed to do. He has contrived to quiet the most mutinous part of his army by setting a body of Affghans<sup>3</sup> on a battalion of his own people who were in mutiny, who cut them to pieces sword in hand. Since then, matters have been quieter. General Avitabile helped to settle his folks by garnishing the walls of Peshawar with gibbets and mutineers. The wife<sup>4</sup> of Nau Nihal Singh has miscarried which looks suspicious, and it is said that Sher Singh will formally be acknowledged by Lord Auckland, ceding Peshawar to us, and subsidising a body of troops. This is rumour, but rumours here are very frequently true from the impossibility appar-

ently of all officials to keep State secrets. It is likely, for Peshawar is valuable in every way, and so is the subsidation (is there such a word) of Sher Singh who will of course lose his independence and become as much ours as any other so called independent Prince of India. A short time will clear up this, and I shall be continually on the lookout for news of all sorts. But to return to the new G.G. If he is a Tory he must not be one of the bigoted old school; the tone in India is decidedly liberal, I think, especially of the press and many very necessary and urgent *reforms*, a word of dire import to an old Tory, will be demanded of him—principally in the civil Government of the country, and in the education department: above all in the police. I have at last, through my trusty friends the booksellers in Calcutta, got the report I have alluded to before. It is by the Superintendent of Police for the whole of Bengal, and is a clear straightforward production, sparing no one. As I heard and imagined the *exposé* is very bad—very. Crime in many places increases rather than diminishes and in no case is the Police effectual for the prevention of offences, many of them committed under their very noses, but only for the partial apprehension of offenders.

The general news of India is dull this month. There has been a spirited action at Girisht<sup>5</sup> on the Helmund beyond Candahar between Akhtur Khan a rebel chief, at the head of 5,000 men incited by Kamran, and joined by the Ghilzais (letters from Kamran were intercepted by Todd long ago), and Captain Woodburn and one of the Shah's Sepoy Regiments, 2 guns, and a Regiment of Affghan horse which did nothing. The Affghans advanced



very boldly three times, and once got in among the baggage in the rear. They were driven back however with great loss and retired, leaving 400 men dead on the field, on our side the loss was trifling, and the Sepoys behaved admirably. It used to be thought that the Hindustanee had no chance with an Affghan, but the latter are licked soundly every engagement, being themselves the attacking party and immensely superior in numbers. From Upper Scinde the news about young Nusseer Khan<sup>6</sup> still fluctuates, one day he is coming in and another he is swearing vengeance against every Feringhee in the world—a pleasing state of uncertainty for there is little doubt, if he were on the Musnud of Khelat and settled, a great portion of our troops might be withdrawn from that terribly unhealthy country. Ross Bell<sup>7</sup> is said to have resigned but this too is a rumour. The Ghilzais are quiet, but the whole of that part of the country is unsettled and feverish, and insurrection would break out if there was a leader tomorrow. Akhtur Khan's affair was connected with what I mentioned last month, but he has got a settler I suspect.

Nothing new with me, except that the man whose post I occupy comes out 3 months sooner than he wrote he intended, and I shall have to vacate my good berth in October. I may hold the charge of a regiment for two months till the commandant arrives, and after that join my corps to do that most wearying of all duties, regimental routine and drill, for a period to which I see *no end*. A poor outlook: but I hope, I hope. I have begun another book<sup>8</sup> a Tale of the time of Sivajee the founder of the Mahratta power. The time is a stirring one, and I believe

it does not signify how old the story may be supposed to be, so that it interests. If you do *not* think so, and think it put too far back (200 years) I will not go on with it. Pray let me know therefore.

It was a lucky thing meeting that queer little fellow Richardson the Editor of the *Malta Times*. I will continue to forward my dispatches through him. If you visit Malta pray call upon him, his shirt collars are worth any money, and he is otherwise worth seeing. He will much amuse you, but, poor devil, he was too sick to talk much on board the *Alecto* when I met him—he would be rich when well.

<sup>1</sup> In England the Whig Ministry of Melbourne was tottering to its fall. Peel with the Tories did not come in till September; but even in April he had been forming a cabinet on paper. Reeve's own sympathies were with the Tories (*History of The Times*, vol. ii).

<sup>2</sup> Auckland's period of tenure of the Governor-Generalship was due to expire at the end of the year.

<sup>3</sup> The incident referred to was the action of General Avitabile in collecting a body of Afghans in May 1841 to attack a mutinous Sikh regiment. The Sikhs were not cut to pieces. They repulsed the Afghans and the losses were about equal; but the Sikhs lost most of their belongings and submitted unconditionally. Avitabile (1791–1850), a Neapolitan, by far the most ruthless, but also one of the ablest, of the Europeans employed by the Sikhs. During the Afghan War he rendered great assistance to the Indian Government, and to British officers individually.

<sup>4</sup> Nau Nihal Singh, son of Kharak Singh son and heir of Ranjitsingh, had been killed in the preceding November under very suspicious circumstances, while performing his father's funeral rites. A son posthumously born would have been the heir to the Punjab throne.

<sup>5</sup> The action referred to was fought on 3 July 1841 by a force under Captain Woodburn, described as one of the best of the officers lent to Shah Shuja's army. He was in November of the same year treacherously attacked and killed with 150 of his men. The Sepoy regiment, though nominally in the service of the puppet king Shah Shuja, was recruited in the same area of Hindustan as the Company's regiments of the Bengal

army and was trained and commanded by British officers. The Jan Baz, or Afghan cavalry in Shah Shuja's pay, did not merely 'do nothing' as Taylor says. They ran away and looted Woodburn's baggage.

<sup>6</sup> Nasir Khan, the son of Mehrab Khan, Khan of Kelat, and therefore the head of the confederacy of Baluch and Brahui tribes. His hostility was natural as his father had been killed when his fort of Kelat was stormed by British troops in 1839. Principally through the efforts of Colonel Stacy, the political officer, Nasir Khan had already been brought into friendly contact with Nott at Kandahar. He stood loyally by his engagements during the troubles of 1842 and until his death by poison in 1857.

<sup>7</sup> Ross Bell, the unsuccessful political agent in Upper Sind, had died at Quetta before this letter was written.

<sup>8</sup> This was the first beginning of *Tara*, a novel which was not completed till after Taylor's retirement. It was published in 1863.

## LETTER 5

[This letter, dated from Ellichpoor 26 September 1841 begins with comments on the evident low spirits shown in Reeve's letter. Taylor rejoices that his correspondent proposes to leave London for a while, and that he will return in a frame of mind to enjoy it. He continues:]

*Ellichpoor 26th September 1841*

So at least prate I from this fiery land, or land of mugginess as I should the rather call it, which, if it distil not the very marrow from ones bones, faith, it is 'most strange. For the last month we have been living in an atmosphere of vapour by day and night enough to choke a dog much less a Christian, superlative mugginess. This however is passing away, and with October comes our cool weather which while it lasts, till January ends, is delicious; but I am wandering. Truly your letter distressed me, and it was well the end had a brighter tone than the beginning else I should have been really uneasy about you. When I hear from you next it will be on your return, and most sincerely do I hope that the journey may do you all the

good I pray it may and you anticipate. It is much to get out of harness to kick out of the traces, to take a hearty satisfactory gallop anywhere, and to return soberly when the excitement of such doings has in some measure given way.

I am glad to see that there is a majority on the elections, and that there is hope of a firm Government at last.<sup>1</sup> I believe that the Conservative party has a fairer array of talent in it than the other and shall look out anxiously for the next mail which I suppose will give us the result of the meeting of Parliament and the formation of the new Ministry. Who is to be over the Board of Control and who G.G. of India? Sir James Graham,<sup>2</sup> as everyone says here who pretends to know anything of the matter, or any one from the Upper House? Lord Ellenborough<sup>3</sup> is a bad man I believe for the Palmer interest, and could and would understand nothing in their favour. How Sir James Graham may be in this respect it is useless to speculate, but we will hope that he will be able to see, hear, and understand for himself. One's own interests always come first into consideration. Politics are certainly second to them. So you see I turn to the Palmer affairs instead of giving you any speculations upon Sir J. Graham's probable conduct in political matters here. What are or were his views in relation to the Afghan War? How is he disposed to Russia? to the Sikhs, to Persia etc.; these are the touchstones of our Indian politics and we are in much expectation of having our doubts cleared up ere very long. I do not know that any very great question is awaiting his arrival without it be a Burmese war, which looks probable, and yet is hardly

possible: and the settlement of the Sikhs who are divided and unsettled still. There is this news regarding them which wants confirmation, yet is stated on good grounds, that Sher Singh,<sup>4</sup> to purchase his recognition, has given up Peshawar etc. to Shah Sooja from whom we have taken it, (not by force however, but gentle persuasion) to assist to pay the debts he owes us, and is likely to owe us for some time to come. If the thing is managed it is a clever thing. Peshawar is not only valuable, but it is a place of strength and its position admirable. To it, the Affghanistan Army or a great part of it might be withdrawn advantageously and without any fear of consequences which could not be easily remedied if necessary. The Sikhs would be placed comfortably between two fires and heartily bullied if necessary. It is said however that Lord A. is not to be satisfied with Peshawar alone, and will have a subsidiary force at the Lahore court. This if it be true, will reduce Sher Singh to a very insignificant condition, and will strengthen our Affghan policy immensely. At present we dare not retire from Affghanistan, and our occupation of it with fresh demands upon our treasury for resources is ruinous, but with Peshawar we should have something to show for our money, and should be secure, infinitely more than at present, in what may justly be called our new possessions. The subsidiary force will however be the grand coup, and Sher Singh will I suspect be obliged to take it. Lord Auckland has not yet acknowledged him, and will propose this condition as an imperative one. I suspect he is only waiting for the season for campaigning to open to set these matters in train, and there is a gallant army at Meerut, Lodhiana,

Ferozepoor etc. waiting like hounds in the leash, to be slipped at an enemy they have long desired to encounter. If there be a war, it will be short and decisive, the Sikhs<sup>5</sup> will stand one general action and be utterly and irretrievably beaten. This would be a splendid ending to the Affghan war—but we have reversed matters. We should have beaten the Sikhs long ago, and if we had seconded the views of Dost Mahomed ten years ago Runjeet, always a doubtful friend, would have gone down before the English and the Dooranees. We might have been obliged to put down the Dooranees after all, but we need not have feared them while the Punjab was our own, and no one will pretend to say that we could not have fought them better and at less cost with the Punjab than without it. If the reports I have mentioned are true, we are pretty near the great crisis of events in the North-West, and I look anxiously for its denouement. Tharawaddee of Burmah<sup>6</sup> is as you will see unsettled, and his advent to the coast with 70,000 men at least suspicious. Martaban opposite to Moulmein was being fortified, and many splendid war boats had been showing off before the station. It is said the Emperor of China has urged him to this outbreak, but he suffered enough one would think before to make him dread the fire, and his capital and his retreat to it could be so easily cut off by an army from Arracan through the passes now open and known that it is marvellous he risks himself on the sea.

Of myself I have only to say that Captain Robison comes out by the next Mail, and will be here next month. I shall have to tell you therefore that I have given up this pleasant berth in my next letter. What then will become

of me I hardly know now, but you shall be duly enlightened. I am afraid I shall have to go and do regimental duty with my Corps, for I see no hope of anything else, even for years, but I hope nevertheless. The Cavalry Regiment I have no chance of, for the promotion of the man who would have caused the vacancy is no longer attainable by him, consequent on some unexpected changes in his Regiment. I send this and my *Times* dispatch to Mr. Delane. I write all I can think of to interest him and the public but know not how it is liked. Would they send me the papers in which the letters appear that I may see how much or little of them is printed and shape my communications accordingly? May I ask too if there is any pay? I am not greedy, but if others are paid I should like to just get my share. My book progresses slowly, but progresses; one cannot write in such mugginess as we have had with any comfort.

PS. *Tippoo* has been very favourably received in Calcutta.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Conservative successes at the polls which enabled Peel to take office in this month.

<sup>2</sup> Sir James Graham (1792-1861) became Home Secretary in Peel's Government. He was, however, offered the Governor-Generalship in this year.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Ellenborough (1790-1871) had been a member of the Board of Control from 1828 to 1830. Presumably he had shown himself hostile to the claims of William Palmer.

<sup>4</sup> Sher Singh had attacked Lahore in January 1841 and had been declared Maharaja by the Sikh army. He had no real power, and he would probably have been glad to be recognized and supported by the Indian Government. There is, however, no reason to believe that Lord Auckland proposed to make the cession of Peshawar the price of such support.

<sup>5</sup> The two Sikh wars with their fiercely contested battles were to falsify this prediction.

\* Tharrawaddy, king of Burma from 1837 to 1845, was anxious to repudiate the treaty concluded with his brother and predecessor after the first Burmese war of 1825-6. Tharrawaddy, however, became insane and was deposed and the war which Taylor anticipated was postponed till 1852.

## LETTER 6

[This refers to Taylor's approaching departure from Ellichpur and to Reeve's approaching marriage.]

*Ellichpur 24th November 1841*

I too take a small sheet to answer your welcome letter from Geneva which came safe by last mail—for I am on the eve of moving, and have been so worried during the last few days which I usually reserve for my English letters that I have been almost obliged to give up the thoughts of writing any. I find now however that I can achieve a few, and you assuredly cannot be neglected.

I am on the move myself. Robison<sup>1</sup> arrived here yesterday. I gave over charge of the treasury to him and the office books and am to day a free man. I would however that my servitude could have been lasting for I liked the work, and the salary especially, and found that I could save handsomely and easily. Now I am off to the 8th Regiment which is stationed at Hingolee, but which is now out on field service against a man who has started up within the last month upon the banks of the Wardah south east about 100 miles in a very wild tract, as a Pretender to the throne of Nagpoor.<sup>2</sup> He calls himself Appa Sahib, declares he did not die at Joudpoor, and is pretended to be recognized as the real Simon Pure, by his adherents. These have been variously stated at from 1500 to 4000, rag tag and bobtail, with whom he



certainly intended to make a dash at the City of Chandah which is a fortified place. If he could have gained it, he might have been joined by the district, but there appears to be no feeling with him, and, as he is fairly hemmed in by three strong detachments, one of the Nagpoor subsidiary force, one of the Hingolee Brigade, and one from this, so we hear to day that he has not crossed the Wardah as was his proclaimed intention, but has bolted into the thick jungles near Mahoor, where he can certainly do no harm. It is however a curious affair and involved in much mystery, which may hereafter come to light. I must, you see, therefore set off for the Camp, and take command of the 8th *pro tempore*, and I leave this tomorrow intending to go as long marches, 20 miles or so, as I can, till I overtake some force and so find my way to my own Regiment. My wife was fortunate enough to have a most excellent escort to Hingolee or I *hope* to Hyderabad, in the Cavalry Regiment which marched from hence on the 17th. She is the guest of an old friend, the officer in charge of it, who has his wife with him. I have sent comfortable tents, and she will get down famously to her father.

I cannot answer from enquiries this month about General Harland<sup>3</sup> but will do so as fully as I can next. I must write to Calcutta and Bombay for information, for I never heard of the man myself and possess none. If he only gives the Russians as much real information as I did to young Count Nesselrode regarding the condition of our troops and their perfect equipment, they will think a good while before they come to look at us. Nevertheless an adventurer like him, if he be one, may do much harm, in exciting bad feelings and his reception in Russia,

according to you, proves that there is a glance thrown Eastwards, though the Russians must surely be satisfied that no impression is to be made on us, with the means at the disposal of their Government.

I send you two *Bombay Times* which contain all that has been written here regarding the Satara case.<sup>4</sup> There are strong points in the Government case and the strongest, the unanimity of all the Governors of Bombay and most so Sir James Carnac,<sup>5</sup> the personal friend of the Raja's. I daresay he did try to intrigue, and I daresay too that he believed all the nonsense that old witch his mother chose to utter. But I think the punishment too severe, and that anything short of this, would have taught him the power of the British Governors and the hopelessness of warring or contending against it. I think he has been ill advised by Dr. Milne who is a meddling old fool, and other persons besides, who have taken his money and rendered him no service. I hope the matter will go before Parliament and I hope the man will be restored, because I think that will have a better effect on the country generally than his banishment to the Holy City. I think the Mahratta confederacy is still strong, if not in means, at least in feeling, and I do not think it can be agreeable, or indeed quietly bearable by any, to see the head of the noble house of Sivajee dispossessed, and a dissolute man set up in his room. Read the papers however and judge for yourself. You can judge as well as I, since the matter did not come under my notice in India, and the great inquiry occurred while I was in England. *Here* there is little of the old Mahratta national feeling that remains to guide one to an estimate of the truth.

The people only know that he was removed from his kingdom, and wonder at the power of the 'Coompany Bahadoor' in being able to do such things noiselessly. I have no doubt that the removal has had a good general effect, but the Government can afford to be clement, and really the idea of an intrigue for troops from Goa, to turn out the English, is too absurd to be thought of even.

So I have been touching on the right string at times, and you at last acknowledge that there is a chance of your being married. Well, dear Henry, if the warmest wishes for the fulfilment of your most sanguine hopes can add any mite of happiness to the store you are I feel sure laying up for yourself, you have them from this far land as truly and fervently as though I grasped your hand and uttered them. When you are married it will be a severe disappointment to me that I cannot enjoy the sight of your commencing happiness, but it will add one more to the many links which bind me close to England, that I will hope, some time, to come and witness its maturity. I mention the subject to no one, but my wife knows it, and joins in my feelings towards you with true warmth and eager hope. I trust you will have soon more to say on this most interesting subject, the connection of your fate. 'Kismut', 'nusseeeb',<sup>6</sup> what you will, is enough to make one superstitious. I would I had, also, a lake of Geneva. I send John Edward<sup>7</sup> an article of some 50 pages on Education in India. Lord Auckland's minute on the subject is justly open to animadversion; he has gone back instead of forwards in the cause and I write as I suppose in slack water as regards Governors General. The turn of the tide may do everything or nothing for the enlighten-

ment of the Indian people. I pray you aid the subject for it is one you must feel of the last importance to the regeneration of India. Tharawaddee is quiet but we doubt him, as well we may. So are the Sikhs and it, is stated positively that there is to be a Subsidiary force partly raised among them. I shall believe it when I see it and till then give Lord A. every credit for attempting to obtain it. The Sikhs are doing wonders in Thibet<sup>3</sup> and have met the Nepal frontier beyond the Himalaya. Is this for good or evil? The latter certainly to the Thibetans and Chinese who are heavy sufferers. This is a powerful diversion in our favour with the Chinese, and may help our cause.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Hugh Robison, see note on Letter 3.

<sup>2</sup> Appa Sahib, otherwise Mudaji Bhonsle, ex-Raja of Nagpur. After his treacherous attack on a British force in November 1817, he was taken prisoner but escaped. He took refuge in Rajputana and his death at Jodhpur was reported in 1840. The Pretender here referred to was an undoubted impostor. His rising was crushed by the vigorous action of the Nizam's army, but the embers of the trouble smouldered for some months.

<sup>3</sup> Josiah Harlan (1799-1871), an American adventurer and self-styled General, who served in the armies of the Indian Government (as a doctor), Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja, and Dost Mahomed. His very unreliable book was published in America in 1842.

<sup>4</sup> After the downfall of the last Peshwa in 1818, Pratapsing, the representative of Shivaji's family, was re-established as Raja of Satara by the British Government. On the clearest evidence of his plotting against that Government, including an intrigue with the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, he was deposed in 1839, in favour of his brother Shahaji. Taylor is wrong in referring to the latter as 'dissolute'. He bore the most excellent character.

<sup>5</sup> Sir James Rivett Carnac (1785-1846), Governor of Bombay 1839-41. Dr. John Milne (1775-1841) was a retired medical officer on the Bombay establishment. He had died some months before the date of this letter.

<sup>6</sup> *Kismet* or *nasib*, both meaning 'destiny'.

<sup>7</sup> John Edward, Taylor's second cousin.

\* This refers to the action of Zorawar Singh, the Sikh Governor of Jammu, in Ladakh and Tibet. It ended finally in utter disaster to the Sikh army.

## LETTER 7

[The letter is dated 25 March 1841, but, from its opening words, and from the events it mentions, this should clearly be 25 December. Reeve has endorsed it as 'Received Janry 1842'. It could only have reached England at the end of that month by an exceptionally fast passage. After the congratulations on Reeve's marriage, the letter tells of the terrible news from Afghanistan. It is needless to enlarge on the fatuous policy of the Governor-General and his advisers, and on the mismanagement and feebleness of the British Envoy, Macnaghten, and the British Commander, General Elphinstone, at Kabul. It is more pleasing to note the spirit in which, as shown by Taylor's letters, the British in India received the news of a calamity which was bound to affect the prestige of British authority in all parts of the country.]

*Hingolee 25th March [sic] 1841*

On a holy and memorable day, one on which a thousand prayers and fervent wishes for those one loves rise into one's heart, I send you my congratulations on your marriage<sup>1</sup> with Hope Richardson. . . .

[The somewhat conventional reflections and wishes on this occurrence may be omitted.]

I wish I could return you good news, though as far as personal concerns go, all is fair with me. But the public news is bad indeed. There has been an insurrection in Cabool, poor Burnes,<sup>2</sup> his brother, and many officers have fallen, and since the first few days fighting no news has been received which gives rise to the worst anticipations. The outbreak took place on the 2nd November and Burnes was the first who fell, shot while mounting his horse by a man he had formerly employed. Others

followed ; some of our troops with Shah Soojah retired to the Bala Hissar. The rest with the Envoy<sup>3</sup> were in the so-called Cantonments. There had been much desperate fighting and the list of officers killed is fearful. No attempt could be made at offensive operations which proves that the force of the enemy was overwhelming. Here then the bubble of Shah Soojah's popularity has burst on the march of the first brigade towards Hindostan under Sir Robert Sale,<sup>4</sup> which had to fight its way from within a few short marches from Cabool to Jellalabad through passes defended at every turn by the people at the rate of 4 miles a day and with a loss of one fourth of the whole, and when it was utterly impossible for it to return provisions and ammunition being alike exhausted. The revolt extends everywhere even to the neighbourhood of Candahar and Ghuzni. From Cabool only has the news come and from Sale. The latter was in a fearful strait for some days at Jellalabad, surrounded by thousands of the enemy and with only 5 days provisions. A further supply had been received, however, and he was safe and in good spirits by the last account.<sup>5</sup> Reinforcements, such as could be sent, were on their way and there is a sullen murmur of vast preparation on the part of the Indian Government to meet the storm and any other by which they may be menaced. What shall be said of the whole of the politicals of Affghani-stan who have failed to discover such a conspiracy concocted under their very noses, what of our King and his people who profess to be ours ? Three years expenditure of blood and treasure has passed for nought. There can be no doubt of one thing that any retrograde movement now would be madness. There we are and

there we must remain, and whether as ourselves or as the upholders of that miserable Shah Sooja will soon be seen. I often told you that the storming of Ghuznee and Cabool was all very well but it would be afterwards when we came to know the people and attempt to settle the country that the difficulty would arise. Do I despair then? No. The country will be maintained and the British honour will rise. If the Affghans have put forth all their strength in this matter, so much the better, and when defeat to them comes, and it will come, they will hardly rise again. But other men than Burnes, (good traveller as he was), and above all Macnaghten with his pomp and absurdity must manage matters. We want men like Sutherland<sup>6</sup> who has a spice of the spirit of the Elphinstone, Jenkins and Malcolm school, one better fitted to rule and conciliate the rude spirits of Affghanistan than an ex-Secretary of Calcutta whose experience of the soldiery of India was confined to a salute from a sentinel as his carriage passed his post. I have written a long letter to the *Times*. Your promise, or news, at least encourages me—I am thankful for £100 per annum or as much more as may be given. I have not, they will allow, been mercenary for I have written as much without pay as I had need to. I pray, however, for instructions as to whether the epistles are too long, too diffuse or not diffuse enough. Lord Ellenborough will have enough on his hands when he comes. I pity Lord Auckland but, whatever may be said of his measures, he cannot defend the men who carried them out. Burnes will be greatly regretted and justly, and the more so from the mode of his death. Woodburn,<sup>7</sup> the gallant fellow who fought so bravely on

the Helmund, is gone too. He and a small detachment were cut to pieces within two marches of our force at Ghuzni on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the day of the outbreak at Cabool.

We have had some fighting in our part of the world. I was not in it, but the Ellichpoor Brigade or rather 4 Companies of it with two guns and 80 cavalry attacked some of the Pretender Appah's adherents who were in a strong village and killed 150 of them. The cavalry alone charged a body of Affghans of whom we have many here, and, though they fought desperately, left dead on the field 69 men—two of the whole body laid down their arms and four or five escaped. Appah is a prisoner here, and will go down to Hyderabad and be hanged, I hope most truly, as he and his adherents have set the country in a ferment. He pretends to be the Ex-Raja of Nagpoor, but is profoundly ignorant of the events of the period and of the members of his own family. I am here in command of the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment, *pro tempore*, till Cap<sup>t</sup> Roebuck<sup>s</sup> comes out.—I left Ellichpoor on the 25<sup>th</sup> and joined my Corps 150 miles to the East of this on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Appah had then been taken. So I have now to do drill, and am parading my Reg<sup>t</sup> in a wonderful manner every morning.

If you can send me a letter to Lord Ellenborough it will, as you know, be everything to me. I shall try to get one through Lord Redesdale, the only Tory I know, and who is a connection<sup>9</sup>—other hope I have none.

<sup>1</sup> Reeve married Hope, daughter of John Richardson of Kirklands, Roxburghshire (1780–1864), on 28 December 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Lt.-Col. Sir Alexander Burnes (1805–41). His brother was Lt. Charles Burnes, 17th Bombay Infantry.

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Macnaghten. Taylor is in error in supposing that he



had no military training. He was in the Company's Army from 1809 to 1814 when his linguistic abilities led to his transfer to the Civil Service.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Robert Sale (1782-1845), mortally wounded at the battle of Mudki.

<sup>5</sup> The reinforcements under Brigadier-General Wild were unable to force their way to Jellalabad, and retired to Peshawar. Sale's position proved to be less desperate than was at first imagined.

<sup>6</sup> Lt.-Col. John Sutherland, of the Bombay army, then Resident at Gwalior. He had been a friend of Taylor at Hyderabad. He died at Bharatpur in 1848. His book on the relations of the Indian States to the Government is still valuable. Mountstuart Elphinstone, John Malcolm, and Richard Jenkins were all famous as political officers.

<sup>7</sup> Woodburn, see Letter 4, note 5.

<sup>8</sup> Captain John Roebuck, a local officer in the Nizam's service from 1819 to 1853.

<sup>9</sup> The connexion was through Taylor's mother, *née* Mitford.

## LETTER 8

[Although this letter was written a full month after the last, it contains no further reliable news from Afghanistan: an indication of the suspense under which the British in India had to remain. Taylor's own future seemed dark enough. He appeared likely to return in a subordinate position to his own regiment in a remote station with uncongenial duties. His dissatisfied state of mind is indicated by his grievance that the Resident did not appoint him to command an Artillery company. The charge of the company was given to a junior Infantry officer, but that was a temporary arrangement until an Artillery officer was obtained from Madras. This should have been obvious to Taylor: yet he did not hesitate to appeal to the Governor-General on the point.]

*Hingolee 26th January 1842*

A right merrie, happy and prosperous new year to you and your dear wife, now a few days your own. I take it very kind of you that you thought of Robert.<sup>1</sup> He is as good a fellow as ever breathed, and I am sure you will have liked him. There is much in his soft mild manner, and manly look, which if I mistake not will have attached



MARY PALMER

(Afterwards Mrs. Meadows Taylor) with her brothers William and John  
*(From a miniature on ivory)*

you to him. I shall look with great impatience for the next month's dispatch, and if I do not get a letter I shall not I assure you be in the least jealous of the cause. I can believe most fully you are now 'hugely in Love' and if that be not cause enough *not* to write, why, as Shakespeare sings, I never writ, and no man ever loved. I hope you know that little sonnet which contains my creed in the religion of love—'I would not to the marriage of true minds etc.'

I have been lonely enough this Xmas and New Year. My wife is, as I told you, at Hyderabad, and she has not been at all well, which has vexed me. Nothing serious, however, only little attacks of fever which have caused her a good deal of annoyance. By the last accounts however she was better, and had gone out to her cousins at Bolarum, the Nizam's cantonment 12 miles from Hyderabad, for change of air. All the folks here, two or three families, have been kind and attentive, but I have not been able to prevent a good deal of home sickness brought on by remembrances of past pleasures. The year opens gloomily enough upon me, and I have not been used well by the Resident. The charge of the Company of Artillery having become vacant here, and there being no Artillery officer to fill the situation, I applied for it as senior Infantry officer unemployed. My application was refused, and the place has been given to one much junior to myself in the Regiment I have now charge of. If this charge, which will last three years, was to be given to an Infantry officer at all, I, as the senior, ought to have been preferred. I have written to the Governor General upon the subject but almost fear without hope of any

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good. If I get the charge I shall be very comfortable here on £1100 a year; if I do not, I have no hope of anything else whatever, and my regiment<sup>2</sup> is gone to a new cantonment, said to be in a vile situation, lonely and arid, so out of the world too, that I should hardly, I am afraid, be able to keep up the T. correspondence. I should have to do regimental duty too, and the officers of the regiment, 4 in number, are in the lowest class of intellectual beings. Here there are some companions. You shall know next month. I wish I could find out some interest with Lord Ellenborough, and, when you are settled and can look about you, if you could discover any, I should be greatly beholden to you. A very civil letter from Delane this month about the letters, I am right glad they please him. His letter is dated the 3rd some days after yours, and he mentions the remittance which no doubt you have got. Praed's are my bankers and if you will pay whatever you get to them, I shall be greatly obliged to you.

Lord Ellenborough will find a very pretty mess when he comes which it will tax his ingenuity to clear up. As to Affghanistan, I mean, the northern part of which will have to be reconquered. There is no news from there up to the present date that can be depended on *in the least*. No dispatches whatever have been published, and all is uncertainty and gloom. One paper and report says that the Envoy and General have capitulated and have agreed to evacuate Affghanistan, another that the enemy has suffered severely and that a large portion has withdrawn from the confederation. Again we hear that the troops are starving and that there are only two days' provisions in the Bala Hissar, and, in the same paper, that, after the

defeat of the enemy, provisions had poured into the town and were plentiful. These are all native rumours; as to dispatches none can be sent through the country, except concealed in the most extraordinary ways about the person, rolled up and inserted into a quill. Even these in some instances have been detected, and the messengers put to death. Ghazni<sup>3</sup> is said to have fallen, but I do not credit the report. The garrison was perhaps too weak, but Colonel Palmer has had ample time to strengthen himself and lay in provisions, the Affghans have no artillery, and it is not likely it could be carried by a *coup de main* as it was by us. This want of news is the most distressing part of the whole, and we have actually been a month without anything authentic. If the Government have received even indifferent dispatches I think they should be published, for suspense is even worse than bad news in such cases. Lord Auckland's Earldom must sit uneasily on him I think, and it will hardly suit him to face the House of Lords and a Tory Government with so practical a commentary as the present, upon his unwise policy going on. Alas for poor India, when will the Government be able to employ any of her revenues to her lasting improvement? I wish I knew Dwarkanath Tagore<sup>4</sup> who is going home to be a Lion of great voice. He is a fine fellow and Calcuttaites have been feasting him on his departure. I should like to have given him a note to you. You will however meet him at home no doubt.

<sup>1</sup> Robert. Meadows Taylor's brother, the Rev. Robert Mitford Taylor.

<sup>2</sup> This was Taylor's original regiment.

<sup>3</sup> Ghazni, occupied by Colonel Palmer with the 27th Bengal N.I., held

out till 6 March 1842 when from want of provisions the garrison had to surrender on terms which were immediately violated.

<sup>4</sup> Dwarkanath Tagore (1795-1846), a well-known Calcutta public man. He died in London when on a second visit.

## LETTER 9

- [This letter also was written in anxiety about public and private affairs. The seriousness of the news from Afghanistan is apparent. Although Mrs. Taylor was better for the moment, her ill health seems to have been constant till her death two and a half years later. Taylor was also anxious about his own prospects. This must have been the reason for what would appear the somewhat daring step of writing direct to the Governor-General to ask for the command of a cavalry regiment. It was doubtless true, as he states, that many of the officers of the Nizam's cavalry had originally been infantry officers: but they had served for a long period in the cavalry before commanding a regiment. Thanks to the Resident, all turned out better than Taylor anticipated. He was also clearly anxious about the affairs of his father-in-law, Palmer. At the time of this letter it would seem that the claim for the sums which Palmer believed to be due to him was being pursued in England.]

The letter, written in the midst of his travelling, is headed *Sungum*. This word, meaning 'joining', is applied in India to the pleasant place where two rivers meet in a thirsty land. Such a place was often chosen as a resting-place on the road.]

*Sungum February 19th, 1842*

Thus far am I on my way to Hyderabad from Hingolee, which I left on the 14th and have been travelling at the rate of 30 and 35 miles a day since, a distance which to you who have railroads is a trifle of an hour or so, but here on horseback, a very different affair, especially when it is necessary to keep servants up with one for food and clothes. I have been summoned down sooner than I expected, and unpleasantly too, since the cause is the

illness from fever of my poor wife which has kept me in a very anxious state for the last three weeks. At one time for about four days I was greatly alarmed on her account, and, as it was impossible for me to leave the Regiment as I was the only officer with it, and impossible to get to her in less than 6 or 7 days, I was obliged, with what temper I could muster, to bear the suspense. Thank God however that the danger passed away, and has left nothing but great weakness, from which she is slowly but certainly, they write me, recovering. I hear she is greatly reduced which indeed cannot be wondered at. As an officer arrived at Hingolee to whom I could give over charge of the Corps, I started on the 14th and hope to be in Hyderabad tomorrow. It is 70 miles from this, but I shall ride 40 this evening, and a Palankeen and bearers will meet me where I shall stop and take me in. There has not been time to lay a regular Dawk<sup>1</sup> for me, as I have come within two days, as fast as the Post, and I must therefore scramble on as well as I can. Luckily, I have good horses which are quite fresh, and I could, if needs be, easily ride in. I shall be thankful however to get to my Palankeen tonight or early tomorrow morning, for it is sleepy work riding all night at a walk, and the sun has become too powerful to travel beyond ten o'clock in the forenoon. I have every hope of finding my dear wife better as a note reached me today by the post to say that she was continuing to amend, and I shall be very thankful to get to her, not only because I know I shall be a great comfort to her, but because my suspense will be at an end in a great measure, which I do assure you has been as much as I could bear at times.

I have now left the 8th Regiment for good. Captain Roebuck was to arrive on the 22nd when I should have left Hingolee, according to orders to join my Regiment. Whether I shall have to do so or not now depends upon the favour of the Resident, for I cannot expect anything, to prevent my going to that horrible new station except his permission to remain at Bolarum, (our Hyderabad Cantonment) and do duty with the Regiment<sup>2</sup> stationed there, and I assure you the prospect of this not being allowed me with the hot weather almost begun, and no prospect of being able to build even a rude barn for shelter at that new place, and the state of my wife's health, caused me very deep distress. I have hope, however, that they may not be hard on me at Hyderabad and allow me to remain there till at least after the rains, when I may be able to see my way more clearly. In spite of this gloom, however, there is a ray of hope of something better. I think I told you last month that I had applied for the charge of the Artillery at Hingolee to Lord Auckland, having as I conceived been ill used by the Resident about it. I have received a very civil reply from his Lordship, who regrets that my not having been given charge of the Artillery should have in any way appeared hurtful to me, and assures me that the vacancy is but a very temporary one, the Madras Government having immediately to supply an officer to fill the place of the man temporarily withdrawn. Now if the Resident had told me this, I should have been satisfied at once and should not have written to Lord Auckland at all. It was worth while doing so, however, for the concluding paragraph of his Secretary's letter which says that L. A. begs again to assure me that



he is very anxious to advance me and that it will afford him great pleasure to find an opportunity before he leaves India.

Now, just before I left Hingolee I heard, as did others, that the Captain Inglis<sup>3</sup> I before mentioned to you as likely to make a vacancy in the command of a Regiment of Cavalry, had succeeded in purchasing out his Major, and was on the point of promotion. I thought therefore that, where so much was at stake, I should not hesitate in making another application to Lord Auckland for the Cavalry Regiment, and, from the tenor of the letter I have quoted to you, proceeds my twinkling of hope. It is just possible that the vacancy may occur before Lord Ellenborough's arrival, and if it does Lord Auckland may give it to me—for my claims to it, independently of any favour, are stronger than those of any other claimant to it. *It does not, I should think and hope, matter about my being an Infantry officer.* Two thirds and more of the Nizam's Cavalry officers being Infantry men, and the Corps being Irregular Cavalry, requires no great knowledge of Military Cavalry regulations and drill. I shall not be able to tell you of my success in this matter by this mail, as I only heard of Inglis, and wrote to Lord Auckland, on the 11th. So you may hope as I do. If I do not get the vacancy, I am afraid, dear Henry, that my prospects are gloomy indeed for I see nothing else to look to in the narrow field of this service. But it is too bad to trouble you with all my hopes and fears, or to cast any shade however trifling upon your happiness. As far as human enjoyment will carry you towards it, yours should now be perfect, and with an independent position, and the security of your

best affections you have little to desire beyond the attainment of any matter to which your praiseworthy ambition is exciting you. I assure you I look for accounts of you and yours with the greatest interest, and as the mail is in, it can only be a few days ere I receive my letters. I am not sure of one from you, but Robert will write I know, and, as he is a famous gossip, I shall hear of all the doings at your marriage.

What can I tell you regarding affairs here? Nothing but gloom. There was a miserable list of officers who have been killed or not heard of since the Cabool convention, (which means I am afraid killed too), amounting to nearly 130, enough to break one's heart to look at. I knew no one there, but it hardly oppresses me the less for that. You will see also Lord Auckland's proclamation which some call strong and able, but which I do not think, upon consideration of it, up to the mark. This can be accounted for by the absence of unanimity at the Council Board, and the strong feeling which it is said exists there that there should be no more Affghan war, and that we should withdraw with as much credit as we can muster in the Spring. Yet how can this be done? With the murders of Burnes and Macnaghten unaccounted for, and the treacherous and utter destruction of the whole of the Cabool Brigade can we sit down quietly and forbear? Then the unhappy ladies too and children are they to be abandoned? God forbid: and however Lord Ellenborough may deplore the policy of the war, and its fatal results, I do not think he will abandon what remains of our position, nor give up the measure of retribution which the conduct of the Affghan leaders and people demands.

I am afraid however of the heads of the Military Departments. Sir Jasper Nicolls<sup>4</sup> is worn out and prates or babbles of former doings at Mess dinners instead of working, and making others work. Wild<sup>5</sup> who was sent forward with 4 fine Regiments to clear the Khyber pass, might have done so, and relieved poor old Sale by this time; but guns were refused him by the C. in C. He went on, begged two from Avitabile at Peshawar which turned out useless, and having got hold of Ali Musjid, the worst part of the pass, was obliged to abandon it. He is now at Jumrood at the mouth of the pass, and will wait for Pollock's brigade ere an attempt is made to force it. Pollock<sup>6</sup> has guns and Europeans, and it is hard if he does not carry it, and yet it will be hard fighting, and there will be fresh catalogues of officers and men killed. This is however but the fortune of all wars. I shall write as strongly as I can to the T. this month for more troops and more commanders. Sir H. Gough is a good one, and a man with his energy would do much. We want such men, and the Duke ought to send one equal to the emergency. Could troops be sent through Egypt too? Four Regiments sent by that route and landed at Kurachee, would have an immense moral effect, and, as Egypt is open now, surely this might be done. India is quite quiet at present, and, if this crisis passes without an *émeute*, it will show beyond question the hold we have on the country. Certainly I see no one to rise. The Mahratta attempt in our parts has been put down by our troops, and we, the Nizam's, and Jalna<sup>7</sup> and Hyderabad forces are enough, for the Dekhan. There has been a sad business<sup>8</sup> at Hyderabad, however, the force there being and having been in a

state of mutiny. I warned all people of this in my last letter to the *Times*, which every body of course would turn up their noses at. It has come true, however, and whatever may be the fault of the Government in attempting any reductions in the pay of the Sepoys, this event shows a bad spirit in them. It has come too at an awkward crisis, and *may* have a bad effect. I know no particulars as yet, except that the Company's Cavalry Regiment was taken prisoners by the Nizam's Cavalry Regiment or rather half Regiment and is in confinement at Bolarum. Two of the Company's Infantry corps have been marched towards Madras, and a wing of another is in confinement. Chundoo Lall has given a Regiment of his Irregulars to take the duty in Secunderabad, and half of one of our Corps is there also. I will tell you more when I get in. Indeed I must stop now, for I am cramped with sitting cross legged. I have no table but my knees, and am writing on a carpet which, spread under a tree, has been my dwelling place since I left Hingolee. It has been a great pleasure to have this bit of gossip with you and has relieved me of low spirits in a great degree.

*February 21st*

I arrived safely and well yesterday though somewhat jolted in the Palankeen. I would far rather have ridden the whole distance. I am thankful to say that my dear wife was better, but she is very very weak, and still confined to her bed, from weakness only, however, for her disorder has been got under by skill. If it please God I shall soon see her restored to strength. She has been worse than they ever told me she was, and I would I had

known this sooner, for I could, if the emergency had been represented, have quitted Hingolee sooner. It is too late however to regret this now. I have received your letter which was most acceptable. I rejoice with you with all my soul in your happiness.

I will write to you on the Palmer affair next month. Arabin<sup>9</sup> writes that we are strong now, and should make a push. With kindest wishes believe me

<sup>1</sup> *Dawk*, or *dák*, here used in its proper sense of transport by relays of men or horses. Hence it came to mean the 'mail' generally.

<sup>2</sup> The Resident duly gave the permission, and Taylor did duty with the 4th Infantry till he went to Shorapur.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Hugh Inglis (1801-88), 2nd Madras Light Cavalry, serving with the Nizam's Army. The Majority involved was in his regiment in the Company's Service.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Jasper Nicolls (1778-1849), Commander-in-Chief in India. Though he was doubtless past his best, Fortescue (xii. 253) gives him high praise at this time.

<sup>5</sup> For a correct account of Wild's advance and retirement, see Fortescue, xii. 260-1.

<sup>6</sup> Sir George Pollock (1786-1862). To the courage and skill of Pollock and Sir William Nott was due the rehabilitation of the British arms in Afghanistan.

<sup>7</sup> Jalna, i.e. the force of Madras troops at Jalna in the Nizam's dominions.

<sup>8</sup> There was unrest among the troops of the Madras army at Hyderabad, owing to orders reducing or abolishing their *batta* or allowance in January 1842. The movement was firmly dealt with by the Resident with the aid of the Nizam's Regular and Irregular troops, and the Madras sepoy returned to their duty without serious incident.

<sup>9</sup> Presumably William St. Julien Arabin, Serjeant-at-law. He had died in December 1841, but had doubtless given an opinion on Palmer's case. He is believed to have been the original of Serjeant Snubbin in the classic case of *Bardell v. Pickwick*.

## LETTER 10

[Taylor's letters from March to June 1842 have not been preserved ; probably Reeve had used them for *The Times*. We have, therefore, no comments on the termination of Lord Auckland's inglorious rule, nor on the assumption of office by Lord Ellenborough on 28 February 1842. In this interval India had learned the full extent of the Kabul disaster, and the discomfoting news that British Officers, and women and children, were in the hands of the leader of the Afghan army, Mahomed Akbar Khan. The general prospects had, however, become brighter. Pollock had easily forced the Khyber Pass and relieved Sale at Jellalabad. He was thus within striking distance of Kabul, if he could get the necessary transport animals. Nott at Kandahar had defeated the hostile forces round that city, and had been strongly reinforced from Sind. Both Generals were anxious to advance on Kabul, but were hampered by the indecisive policy of the new Governor-General, who was apparently afraid of further entanglements in Afghanistan. Fortunately, both Generals were firm, and Lord Ellenborough gave them the opportunity, and threw on them the responsibility, of returning to India by any route they chose. This they interpreted (as Taylor anticipated) as a permission to recapture Kabul.

The object of the Army of the Reserve about which Taylor seems puzzled appears to us obvious. The Sikh army was restless and might have made some excuse for attacking the British troops returning from Afghanistan through their territory. In any case, a further exhibition that the losses in Afghanistan had not exhausted the power of the army in India was clearly desirable.]

*Hyderabad 12th July 1842*

What is to be the intention of the army of 20,000 men which the Governor General has ordered to assemble? If you can make any tolerable guess yonder, 'tis more than we can do here. It is very perplexing certainly and without we are going to take the Punjab why should it have been ordered to assemble at Sirhind? I hope and trust the Sikhs have been faithless and that the G. G. has

got hold of a good cause of war. The Punjab would be a glorious acquisition, and if we had not begun at the wrong end of the affair in this war we should have had it completely settled by this time. You may hear the reason of the force in England, we shall not here unless some babbling fellow lets it out. All however is as close as wax. The Calcutta people are horribly jealous at Lord Ellenborough remaining at Allahabad and doing what he likes, which I suppose he will continue to do as long as he pleases. There is one thing gained that he is away from *Civilian* influence, which from their conceit of themselves I look on as most pernicious.

Why don't the troops, or such as can move, Notts Brigade, advance on Cabool and turn that rascal Akbar Khan out of it? I have no patience to think how we shall sneak out of Affghanistan if we go now. God forbid another winter should be tried but if Nott had been empowered to advance when his camels reached him, he might have taken Ghazni and blown it up by this time and been well on to Cabool. What is to prevent his retiring through the Khyber as well as the Bolan? I don't think the G. G. makes enough of Nott's victories and affairs. I would fire a royal salute at every station in India for every one of them, and the Natives would then know that we were victorious; now they think that we are beaten, and it does not do any good. Still there is no fear, the only *row* is in Bundelkhand and it is a nasty one because there are no troops on the spot. Some Madras troops will be pushed up easily in autumn, and then it will be put down.

'Civis'<sup>1</sup> is Sir *Henry Russell*, (formerly Resident at

Hyderabad), We all know his style and much has been written in Mr. Palmer's private correspondence with him, passages are even word for word, here and there. I wish he was in power with you, he is a very able man. He has a profound knowledge of India and is a very able speaker. As to Mangles<sup>2</sup> speech it is *bosh* I think. He thinks vastly of himself, and I only wish you had some able India men in the House to talk him down, but in truth I don't know where you would get them just now

<sup>1</sup> This refers to a series of letters in *The Times* from 1842 to 1849, afterwards republished, signed 'Civis'. Sir Henry Russell (1783-1852), had been described by the Marquis of Wellesley as the most promising young man he knew, and Kaye the historian says of him that an abler man has seldom gone out to India. He was interested in the transactions with the Nizam's Government of William Palmer's firm. He was, therefore, a bitter critic of his successor Sir Charles Metcalfe, though related to him by marriage. This passage shows that Russell continued to be in frequent correspondence with Palmer, whose claims he had pressed on the Court of Directors. Russell had retired from India at the age of 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ross Donnelly Mangles (1801-72), who retired from the civil service at the age of 38, was M.P. for Guildford from 1841 to 1858, and was the last Chairman of the East India Company.

## LETTER 11

[This letter is largely taken up with Taylor's gloomy view of his prospects. While sympathy may be felt with his dissatisfaction with the small and circumscribed opportunities open to the Nizam's army, his complaint of the larger avenues available for the officers of the Company's armies is hardly reasonable. We may at this date wonder more at a Captain in a local service writing direct to a Governor-General about a promotion which was properly in the hands of the authorities on the spot.]

From the gloomy future that seemed to await him, Taylor was in fact rescued by the Resident to whom he refers in so unkindly a manner in the postscript to this letter. Such criticism is not to



be taken at its face value. This letter was obviously written under the influence of William Palmer. The Resident's efforts, not always directed in the wisest manner, to effect improvements in the State Administration were not appreciated by the Nizam and his Minister. Palmer, always immersed in the intrigues of the State, and anxious to recover the sums due to him from the Nizam, was naturally on the side of the Minister.

Taylor's view that the Indian Government should borrow in England was freely followed in later years. It was never thought advisable, for obvious reasons, that the States should raise loans in the same way.]

*Hyderabad 22nd August 1842*

Your last letter but one came on the very day the mail was to leave the Residency and I had only a few minutes to write you a hurried note about Weld.<sup>1</sup> I have this month sent £50 to my father, which I hope will set him going as there was another £100 available for him. I enclose a note for him, which as you may know his lodgings please send to him; it only contains a few more hints and instructions for the voyage out, and for equipment in London which I have advised to be made as simply as possible. I will introduce him to one or two people in Bombay whom I know. I have seen some portrait drawings of his, really pretty, and better by a thousand times than anything there is here.

Mr. Palmer and I liked your article on the loans to India exceedingly. We lay our heads together in such matters, for his experience is great. A loan to India would of all things in the world do most to unite the two countries in natural interests, and when folks had invested their money in Indian loans, they would take the trouble to enquire where India was, and whether the heads of the inhabitants grew beneath their shoulders or not. We, *i.e.*

Mr. P. and self, thought that the principle of loans might not stop with the Government of India, but might descend to the smaller States. And what a blessing it would be, if they could borrow, and be induced to borrow at 6 per cent, instead of 18 or 24. How easily their people would be taxed and how greatly their resources improved. A loan to the Nizam's government, for instance, would not be half so full of risk as one to any of those wild American States, or to Spain, or to America. Guaranteed or, less than that, authorized by the Indian Government, the State would be most punctual in its' payments, for it would set aside certain districts, which might for the time be under European superintendence, to meet them. Every Mahomedan Government in India is in debt, and I might say Hindoo also, though the sovereign perhaps may be rich—and you may depend on it a vast deal of practical good might be done by the employment of English capital at small interest (for India). I have touched on the subject in the *Times* letter and leave it to your wisdom to allude to it, or not as you please.

I shall not leave off my allusions to Affghanistan, because I get my letters from Delhi quite as quick as the Bombay Editors do: there may be a difference of three or four days but not more, and I am nearer Calcutta than they are. My brother Correspondent, who is McKenna the Editor of the *Bombay Gazette*, soon fell foul of the *Bombay Times* after his attack on the Indian officers as the allusions were made to him personally, saying he was no officer but a scamp who had been in jail etc. etc.—very scurrilous and unworthy of the *Times* was it altogether. McKenna replied vigorously, and so belaboured the

Editor<sup>2</sup> of *Bombay Times* that he has not said a word. I too caught him tripping about Lynch's Ghilzie affair,<sup>3</sup> which he supported only because I abused it, and I fell upon him in the *Englishman*, a Calcutta paper, and belaboured him too; since then he has been civil and has not molested either of us. He is conscious of having made a sad blunder in regard to McKenna and the Indian officers, and my attack has mystified him most completely. I don't however want to meddle with him any more.

I like you beyond everything to get into the country, for there you meditate, I see, how I am to get to you back again—indeed, dear Henry, this is more than I can tell you, for I see no hope before me of anything beyond plain Captain's pay for years to come. I do not croak, nor should I have alluded to the subject except for your letter, but I have no hope of Staff employ, because all the Staff appointments are filled up by men who had better interest than myself. I have no hope of a Corps, except by a death vacancy (and who can think on that!) till some ten years to come, when Captain Adam<sup>4</sup> who commands my Corps will get his Majority in the Company's army. What's to be done then but hope and hope? If I were in the Company's army I would have a race for it with others, but here, the army is very small, not more than a division of Company's Troops, local interests prevail, and there is really nothing to be got. If Lord Auckland had remained I think I should have got the Cavalry Corps; he almost promised it me, and it is not filled up yet, but Lord Ellenborough does not know me, and I have no chance. I wish I was known to *him*. I wrote long ago to ask him for the

Corps, stating my position etc., but I never received any reply which has damped me. So get me letters if you can, for without them, I must even follow the dull routine which is enough to damp any man's hopes and exertions. I shall however be too happy to leave the country altogether whenever anything can be found for me in England which will support me and mine decently, but I must even stay here till that happy day comes. I am thankful to say that I have rude health, and that I enjoy life, as much at least as the animal portion of it is concerned. I long to hear of your visit to the canny North—and have no doubt you will readily tempt Robert<sup>5</sup> over, fishing being with him, as with me, a passion. I heard by the last mail of a vast piscatorial excursion they have been enjoying, he and my father. I could have cried foolishly that I was not with them. They described all our old haunts, and the pools where the great trout lurk, too minutely for one's nerves here.

What are they going to do with the Army of Reserve? Oh that they would thrash those confounded Sikhs, who only look for an opportunity to fall upon us. It will come to what I urge sooner or later and a decent pretext for quarrel is all we want. I send you two *Bombay Times* containing Burnes' letters<sup>6</sup> and the Parliamentary edition beside them. Compare them I pray you and say whether you ever saw anything more flagrant than the alterations made in the spirit and sense by the omissions. Will you take the matter up and expose the solemn farce of Parliament? Lord Auckland will have reached you, and he should be driven to tell the truth about his policy and his alterations of Burnes' letters. I am more than ever

convinced however that he had little to do with it, and that Macnaughten and Colvin, the latter a clever fellow, concocted it all. Oh that they had taken the other end of the stick and bullied old Runjeet.<sup>7</sup> We should long ago have had the Punjab. You may say my political morality is not extensive in regard to this country. I confess it. I confess that I long to see it British, and from one end to the other of the Indus. What have we to do with a nation of wild Highlanders? If they only wore kilts we might quote the old proverb about their breeks. I sent an extract of your last letter to the Calcutta paper, which will please the Ditchers.<sup>8</sup> I allude to Dwarkanath Tagore who is a fine fellow. The Queen should knight him for he is worthy of it from a thousand acts of liberality and munificence. I hope the English people will see these natives as you say, and find out that like Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy<sup>9</sup> and Dwarkanath Tagore they are indeed gentle and intelligent and intellectual people.

PS. I will also send if I can a *Madras Examiner* which will shew you the nature of interference by the Resident at Hyderabad. He is not fit for his situation either by temper or qualifications. The Governor-General's Circular has given the Nizam and his Minister courage, and they have at last, you will see opposed an interference they have long been subject to, without hope of extrication from it.

<sup>7</sup> *Weld*, see Letter 2, note 10.

<sup>8</sup> The Editor of the *Bombay Times* alluded to was Dr. George Buist (1805-60).

<sup>9</sup> Lynch's Ghilzai affair. The reference is to the action of a political officer in Afghanistan who, being threatened in April 1841 by the garrison of a Ghilzai fort, stormed it out of hand, for which vigorous action he was censured.

<sup>4</sup> Captain Alexander Adam (1795-1863), 44th Madras N.I., serving in the Nizam's army.

<sup>5</sup> Robert, brother of Meadows Taylor.

<sup>6</sup> The alterations made in the letters of Burnes, when they were published by the Indian Government, were a subject of parliamentary discussion till 1861.

<sup>7</sup> Taylor ignores the fact that the old Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who died in 1839, had always observed his obligations with the Indian Government.

<sup>8</sup> 'Ditchers', the common nickname for residents in Calcutta as they lived within the ditch dug against a possible Maratha attack in the eighteenth century.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (1788-1859), the first Parsi to be made a Baronet.

## LETTER 12

[To the courageous resolution of Generals Pollock and Nott was due the successful advance to Kabul. The prisoners in the hands of Mahomed Akbar Khan were recovered, and, as Taylor anticipated, Dost Mahomed Khan again ascended the uneasy Afghan throne.]

*Hyderabad 25th September 1842*

After all our uncertainty and the trumpeting of the *Bombay Times* that an advance on Cabool was impossible, lo and behold, it is made. Nott and a noble army is, I hope, at Cabool by the Ghazni road by this time, and Pollock has met him by the other. It is only ten thousand pities that this was not done two months ago, and that Akbar Khan has had the least time allowed him to organise a defence. Who can doubt that had Pollock followed him up with a stout Brigade after the relief of Jellalabad we might have at once arranged matters, hung Akbar Khan and established Futteh Jung<sup>1</sup> or the Dost on the Throne? Now what will be done? Suppose A. K. bolts to Bokhara with the Prisoners and laughs at our

beards, and little is there to prevent this but the elusiveness of the chiefs. I don't think he will stand—he knows that he has too great a chance of a rope or a cannon's mouth. There seems to be little doubt that he has put Futteh Jung to death. If so, who is to be king? Dost Mahomed? I would have it so. The Dost, with us in the Punjab would do very well. And Oh, I do hope we shall take that glorious bit which looks so tempting on the map. We shall see soon, I doubt not. The G. G. is at Umballa with Clerk<sup>2</sup> which looks *Punjabish*.

I have no news of ourselves. The Corps<sup>3</sup> I am doing duty with goes to Aurungabad and I go with it I hope as Acting Adjutant which will give me some more pay than I have now, but is a *troublesome* office. At Aurungabad I shall be rather better off for news than I am here, as the Northern dawks (posts) pass through it to Bombay. I hope I shall be able to get there, for from Lingsoooor where my Corps is I fear I shall be able to send nothing.

Weld<sup>4</sup> writes me that he has work and therefore does not come. I am glad of this, let him hold on in England as long as he can support himself, and after that is hopeless, as it seemed to me to be, he will not starve here. John Edward writes that he only had just found the papers which I sent to you in the Dighton affair. I very much suspect he won't appeal at all, or if he does, so much will go home against him in the shape of Remarks by the Madras Government that yours will not receive his petition, so at least it strikes me. It is strange that General Fraser countenances him, but the old man is desperately obstinate, and will see nothing that he does not choose.

Chundoo Lall who professes Sikh principles though a

Khayet,<sup>5</sup> and hears from Lahore constantly, says he does not believe that we shall attack the Punjab, or that Shere Singh<sup>6</sup> desires our interference. I have heard from other natives, however, that he does, and that the dread of our armies, which must pass the Punjab, alone restrains the Sikh forces from revolution and partition of the kingdom. Inshalla, however, there will be a row and that soon.

<sup>1</sup> Futtah Jung had been placed on the throne by the Afghan nobles as a puppet king. He prudently retired to India with the British forces.

<sup>2</sup> George Russell Clerk (1800-89). Agent to the Governor-General on the North-West Frontier. Afterwards twice Governor of Bombay.

<sup>3</sup> The regiment going to Aurungabad was the 4th Infantry. His own regiment at Lingsugur was the 6th.

<sup>4</sup> Weld, see Letter 2, note 10. J. E. Taylor, see Letter 6, note 7. Dighton, see Letter 2, note 8.

<sup>5</sup> Khayet, more properly Kayasth, a superior caste which was formerly largely employed in the service of Indian States.

<sup>6</sup> Sher Singh, see Letter 2, note 1.

## LETTER 13

[This letter, written in the quiet of an Indian autumn, gives little fresh news. The gratification felt by the British in India at the rehabilitation of their military credit in Afghanistan is reflected in it. The prospect of a struggle with the uncontrolled militarists of the Punjab continued to be a disturbing feature, and many besides Taylor regarded a settlement by force as a lesser evil than the continued threat to the tranquillity of the British Provinces.

The suggestion that the Resident interfered to an excessive extent in the Nizam's affairs has been discussed in the Introduction.]

*Hyderabad 26th October 1842*

I assure you that I did not at all think I was forgotten because last month's mail did not bring me what I have now become so accustomed to look for. Your heat is



terrific, and as bad as India. We have not had the thermometer at 80 these two months. In fact the weather has been delicious as it always is here at this season, and we have been enjoying it in tents, first of all at a party we gave to some friends at the Tombs of Golconda,<sup>1</sup> where we held open house to all who chose to come to see them for a week, and after that at the race course where there has been such racing as could be got up among the officers' horses. I wish you could, and Hope also, have looked in on us at Golconda, where we appropriated one of the large Mausoleums to our use as a dining and sitting room and pitched our tents on the grassy terrace which is around it. I assure you we were very pleasant for the week, and in riding, and wanderings among the old Tombs and ruins, and sketching here and there—there was enough of idle occupation to pass time. I on my part have longed to follow you into Scotland and teach you to throw a fly, which I take to be very delectable pastime in company with a brawling river, to which the trees discourse sweet music. In short as a gentleman said to me the other day 'I assure you I have a Hydrophobia for it'.

I trust all England will have rejoiced at the news taken by the Express steamer and will still more rejoice at what I now send you. Truly the campaigns have been glorious and right well managed. Nott and Pollock deserve well of their country and have proved themselves worthy of Lord Ellenborough's confidence. I believe Lord E. had given much discretionary power to Nott<sup>2</sup> as to the advance on Cabool itself, intending him to turn off to Dera Ismail Khan, if he found Ghuzni too strong for him. This

however was all he wanted, and, the permission to go having been given, you see he has found the road easily enough. It is worth noticing too that he has taken all his baggage to Cabool as well as his stores etc. without losing anything, that his Cattle are in first rate condition and fit to go anywhere, and that he has only lost some 250, out of 3500 Camels. All the officers and men have their tents and are marching as comfortably and with as well supplied a Bazar as they could be in India. In this respect I hear that his camp presents the greatest contrast to that of Lord Keane, and that his officers and men have become so attached to him that they would follow him anywhere. Contrast this with Lord Keane's opinion of him, 'that he was an old woman not fit to hold a command'. Faith, he better deserves a Peerage I think than my Lord Keane, for he had endurance of suspense and privation to encounter during a whole winter, which the other impatient fiery gentleman would have sorely chafed at. I suppose ere this the armies will be on their return, and no one rejoices more than I do that Affghanistan is to be evacuated. I hope that Lord Palmerston *will* drive the Government to recriminate. He will hardly dare to do so I think in the face of the original and un mutilated dispatches of poor Burnes which tell the real truth and are sadly at variance with the Simla manifesto, of October 28, but we shall see. Lord Ellenborough, you will see by *his* manifesto, is not backward in protesting against Lord Auckland's policy, and I do not for my own part follow in the track of those who blame him for a candid exposition of the evacuation of Affghanistan. It would be capital policy to hold some of the forts on the Indus as outposts, Attock<sup>3</sup>

or Dera Ghazi Khan for instance, having also Bukkur in lower Scinde. But how can they be taken? Will the Sikhs give them up or allow us possession? I do not think so without we take the whole country which we ought to do as soon as possible. You may think my political morality very lax, but I think we have a right, the right of self protection to insist on some better security for the Indian frontier than the Punjab affords under its present Government, and I cannot myself doubt that Lord Ellenborough is just now very anxiously thinking how this can be done. By the Lahore *Akhbar* which means *written news* I hear that Shere Singh wishes to put off the G. G.s coming to visit him till next year, or even for another year. But go he will, you may depend on it, and backed by the Army of Reserve, with Nott's and Pollock's forces on the west and Sir C. Napier's on the south will dictate his own terms, and I hope they may be moderate.

I am sorry my April letter miscarried, and I cannot in any way account for it, as it was dispatched in ample time for the Steamer. I had suspected the Head of the Post Office here on more than one occasion, and pray tell Mr. Delane to look well at the Seals of my letters to see if they have not been tampered with. I write no treason and am not afraid of what I write being read here, but if a gratification of idle curiosity puts my *Times* friends to inconvenience, I should be much inclined to deny it. I am glad to hear Weld is busy, and have given up hope of seeing him this year. The field will always be open to him here if he is threatened with loss of work, and when that comes to pass which I hope may be long averted, we will give him a right hearty welcome.

I send through John Edward to you another pamphlet in the Dighton affair, which gives a history of the whole including the libels. Read it if you can, as it will give you an insight into the question of the Resident's interferences in general and General Fraser's in particular, as also a sketch of the legal proceedings up to this date, or to the end of the last Madras term. I don't see how Dighton's appeal can go to England and suspect he will allow the matter to be forgotten, if that is possible, in the delays he or his Solicitors have advised.

<sup>1</sup> Golconda. A fortress and village five miles west of Hyderabad. It had been the capital of the Kutb Shahi dynasty. The State ruled by them was one of the five Muhammadan kingdoms of the Deccan, and was conquered by Aurungzeb in 1677.

<sup>2</sup> In the opinion of Fortescue, Nott was the only senior officer who came out of the Afghan war with entire credit.

<sup>3</sup> As Taylor anticipated, the forts of Attock and Dera Ghazi Khan, which were in the Sikh territory, were not then obtained. Bukkur, the island fort on the Indus between the towns of Sukkur and Rohri, belonging to the less powerful Amirs of Sind, had been occupied since 1838 and was retained.

## LETTER 14

[When this letter was written the future settlement of Afghanistan was still uncertain, and the transfer of Sir Charles Napier from Poona to Upper Sind portended the active policy that was to follow.]

*Hyderabad, 24th November 1842*

I shall look for the next Mail with infinite anxiety on your wife's account, also on Weld's, poor fellow who seems to have been very delicate, if not dangerously ill. Selby<sup>1</sup> writes to me however that he is better and was under Rigby's care whose skill I am very confident in. I hear

he cannot bear the idea of coming to me, so I have let it quietly drop. I shall always be too happy to welcome him, if circumstances should induce him to change the determination

It is very gratifying to have praise from you for the *Times* letters. I know they are not equal. Many causes prevent this and I am often disturbed by petty Regimental duty, Courts Martial or what not, at the very time I wish to collect my thoughts to the task before me. I do what I can, however, and am glad that every now and then there is something better than usual. I have attended to your suggestion and dated my epistle from Poona. This in truth is somewhat necessary, for it is unpleasant to be called names, and I doubt not the Editor of the *Bombay Times*<sup>2</sup> would choose nothing better than to bespatter me with mud like the enclosed which has just reached me, in my own proper name. The other Journals of India particularly the very clever *Friend of India*<sup>3</sup> have been very hard on him lately, quoting him beside the *London Times*, with whom he has been boasting that he agreed, and had converted!

With regard to the advance into Affghanistan, I have seen no reason to alter my opinion. As I have written before, I would not have stirred a foot if the prisoners had been exchanged or given up, but, that having been refused by Akbar Khan, *vide* the G. Gs proclamation I have sent to the *Times*, what else remained than to go on? Akbar Khan must be better known from this disclosure than he was before, and the *Bombay Times* is absolutely silent on the matter. Does this paper enjoy any consideration at home, or is it sheer braggadocio that it does?

I think the G. G. will have an awkward matter to get over in his not having ordered the advance. There is no doubt that he ordered the retreat. It is *broadly* stated apparently in fearlessness of contradiction that both Nott and Pollock advanced on their own responsibility. Would that have been admitted as any palliation if either or both had failed? Why, too, were both kept so long inactive with the means of going on? Pollock did not march with above half the cattle he had when the convoy arrived from the provinces and he would have gone on the next day if he had been permitted. I had thought Lord Ellenborough acting 'especially under the advantage of advice from England would have been above it, and I shall be right glad if you can send me any information which may dispel the public suspense on the subject.

Pollock was at Peshawar on the 8rd, and Nott was following. I am thankful to write that every man is out of Affghanistan. Now we shall see what we shall see regarding this tremendous army of Reserve, and, as to Lord Ellenborough having promised peace to Asia, with which he is taunted as having assembled this army in defiance of his protestations. Why, if the Sikhs will not let him carry a measure their own ruler has agreed on I suppose he must make them.

Are we going to keep Lower Scinde and Belochistan, as also Kurrachee and the ports on the Indus? I suppose so since barracks are ordered to be built and Sir C. Napier's command looks settled. You see no one has been placed on the Cabool throne, and who is likely to get it God knows. I declare it makes me creep to think on the folly of the last three years, and the wretched policy which

directed it. What would Lord Auckland's Government or the Whigs have done in the present case—kept Affghanistan? I do believe they would in defiance of every right, whatever may be said to the contrary. Who could be put on the Throne in pursuance of Sir C. Metcalfe's idea. Futteh Jung? or his brother? or any one else? Any one in our interest would require money, troops, or munitions of war. It would be a Little Go after the Shah Sooja pattern and would utterly fail. No, we are better quit of them altogether. It will be curious to watch Dost Mahomed's progress now. Will he attempt to retaliate? At present the Affghans are too weak, but they may regain strength, and may plague the Sikhs at any rate.

I enclose a note for Weld, in which is a little money for him. Please send it to him for I know not where he may be living when this reaches you, and would not have it miscarry. I know nothing certain of myself yet which is strange, nor can I know till some young men arrive who are to join this service while other officers are away in China. I shall however know for certain next month, and still hope for Aurungabad. My wife and bairn are well, but I have been ailing a bit of late, bilious. I am well however again and indeed it was not worth mentioning this to you across the water. Mary is with her father and all the family in tents on one side of the city near the Nizam's deer preserve, and all are enjoying the country life hugely. The Camp is beautiful, about 50 Tents pitched by me on the sides of a hollow square. I go out when I can, two or three times a week. It is 8 miles from here, a pleasant canter. I have shot three noble bucks, and hope to do more in the deer line.

<sup>1</sup> Selby was a younger brother, destined to die young in Ceylon. Rigby was a cousin.

<sup>2</sup> The *Bombay Times*, founded in 1837, had already under Buist's editorship established that position in Bombay which it still holds as the '*Times of India*'. It, however, adopted a line of criticism regarding actions in Afghanistan which did not commend it to Taylor, however critical he himself was of the policy of Government.

<sup>3</sup> The *Friend of India*, founded and edited by J. C. Marshman, had been since 1835 the leading weekly paper of India.

## LETTER 15

[Although, as the heading of the letter shows, Taylor had already assumed the post which was to give him the chance of distinction in civil administration, he defers all allusion to it till his next mail letter. This brief note was intended to make Major James Outram known to Reeve. Taylor's acquaintance with him dated back to 1825, when Taylor was a newly joined officer and Outram was commanding the Bhil Corps in the province of Khandesh, which borders upon the Hyderabad State. Outram was a noted *shikari*, and the two had enjoyed pigsticking and tiger shooting together. Outram had, as Taylor says, distinguished himself in the early stages of the Afghan war, and latterly as the Chief Political Officer in Sind and Baluchistan. He had, however, fallen out of the good graces of Lord Ellenborough. Outram assigned as the reason for this his support of a young political officer, Lieutenant Hammersley, who had been made the scapegoat for a small reverse to the British arms, and his pressing advice to Lord Ellenborough to order the Kandahar army to advance upon Kabul. Outram's political employment was terminated and he was ordered to rejoin his regiment. He then resolved to take his long overdue furlough to England. On his departure from Sind he was entertained by the officers of the army at Sukkur at a banquet at which Sir C. Napier bestowed on him the celebrated title of the Bayard of India. Outram, however, only got as far on his journey as Bombay, when Napier asked for and obtained his services as his political officer. The association thus begun was to develop into the bitterest of quarrels, owing to Outram's disagreement with Napier's policy and methods.]



*Camp Shorapoor 15 December 1842*

I beg to introduce to you my friend and old acquaintance Major Outram of the Bombay Army who returns to England by the next mail after a long and arduous service in India. His name will I think be familiar to you as the able successor to Mr. Ross Bell in the political management of Scinde and Belochistan, and as having done much valuable and active service during the Affghan war before that. In Scinde etc, his admirable management of affairs during the whole of the very critical period following the outbreak at Cabool has been the theme of general admiration, and he has earned himself the highest praise which the Government of India, his brother officers of the Scinde army under Sir Charles Napier and the Public of Bombay could bestow.

Latterly however Lord Ellenborough has, I think, treated him very scurvily, and, though he returns to England a poor man, yet he has earned that in public estimation which is better than riches, and I can only hope that he will return to India to fill some high place, of which he is most worthy. I have mentioned my connection with *The Times* to him confidentially as I have often had occasion to allude to him in my letters, and I have thought it may aid either his own interests, or the expression of his opinions if you can make the T. open to him for the purpose. His great political experience, knowledge of the countries he has had charge of and their people, and high character will give a weight to every thing he may write, which you could not find in another, and hence I am willing to believe that you will welcome him warmly.

We have not met for many years but are, as I have said,

very old friends and any private attention it may be in your power to bestow on him I shall be much obliged to you for.

## LETTER 16

[This letter announces the beginning of Taylor's work at Shorapur, which was to prove the turning-point of his service in India. His selection by General Fraser for so difficult a post gave him his great opportunity. It was the beginning of seventeen years of civil administration which afforded full scope for his power of work. It freed him from the prospect of routine military duty in small stations which was so distasteful to him.

The Bedars, now more generally and more correctly known as Berads in the neighbouring districts of the Bombay Presidency, are spread over parts of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, and the Hyderabad and Mysore States. They are identical, or nearly so, with the Vedans and Boyas of Madras and the Ramosis of the Bombay Deccan. They are among the peoples often called aboriginal, which only means that they occupied the country before the Aryan, and probably even before the Dravidian, waves of immigration from the north-west. Their name is generally supposed to mean 'hunters'. The words Bedar and Berad are readily interchangeable in Indian vernaculars, but the former was largely adopted because, by the punning system so common among Indian tribes and castes, it was easily (as Taylor observes) identified with the Persian *be-dar* or 'fearless'. The tribe had indeed some title to the epithet. The Mysore Infantry of Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, which fought so stoutly in the Mysore wars, was largely composed of Bedars. Some of them were converted by these rulers to Islam, and their descendants have remained faithful to that faith. The majority of the tribe, however, and probably all of those in Shorapur, remained Hindu. They had always a bad reputation for robbery and violence, but have equally been regarded as loyal and truthful when entertained as soldiers or watchmen. They were recruited in the Bombay army till the end of the last century.

The State of Shorapur was believed to have had a separate existence since early in the sixteenth century. It probably never

attained entire independence but was more or less subordinate to the successive dynasties that warred in its neighbourhood. By the treaty of 1800 the British Government and the Peshwa, the head of the Maratha Confederacy, recognized Shorapur as falling within the Hyderabad sphere of interest. It lay in fact within the limits of the Nizam's dominions, but the confusion and mismanagement of his rule rendered it inevitable that the Resident at Hyderabad should often interfere to prevent disorder and violence. In this letter Taylor blames the Resident for slowness and indecision, but in his Autobiography regards Fraser's policy in a more kindly spirit. The Resident was in fact in a difficult position. He could not employ military force in a territory legally subject to the Nizam without reference to the Government of India and that Government was not likely to regard military operations, however petty, as desirable, especially at this date. In the result, moreover, Fraser was proved to be right. Taylor's tact and patience procured a more satisfactory solution than any display of force would have done. When Taylor had proved his discretion, Fraser was always ready to support him by the dispatch of troops when trouble threatened.

The Shorapur State was at this date about half the size of Wales or of Palestine, with a population probably between one-third and one-half a million. Its importance lay in the fact that the bulk of its people was backward and unruly and that any disturbance among the Bedars of the State would have caused unrest among their fellow tribesmen in the Bombay Presidency.]

*Camp, Shorapoor, 23rd December 1842*

I rejoice with all my heart at, and have been very thankful to hear, by your letter of the 29th October, the excellent news of your dear wife, and the birth of your little one. I remember that when I saw my first, there was a feeling of exquisite delight, one also almost of awe, at any rate of profound responsibility, which I seemed to respond to at once. He died, poor little fellow, but the impression has never passed from my remembrance, nor ever will, it was sudden, so unexpected. And depend

upon it these are the little beings which more firmly bind our energies to the affairs of life than any other incitements to exertion, and you will find yourself a happier man working for your wife and bairn in earning praise for yourself, than you ever did when, though perhaps a happy man, you were alone. But this savours of preachment perhaps, and I had better let it alone. In truth a passing thought laid hold of my pen and ran away with it and it has performed an antic.

I could not write to you a second note by last mail to tell you of my appointment to the charge of these Political affairs for I knew of General Fraser's intentions, nay commands, only just in time to write a few hurried lines to my father, which may or may not have reached Bombay in time for the last steamer. But my appointment was in this wise. This is a little Beudur<sup>1</sup> principality, a low tribe of Hindoos, worth now about 5½ lacs, but formerly 8. It has always been independent but the Peshwa and Nizam bullied it when they were strong enough, and screwed money out of it, and by our treaty with the Nizam which you have, you will see that we are bound to obtain the payment of the Pesheush<sup>2</sup> from hence, etc. Well, this money has been a source of no end of trouble, interference and bother, which has done no good, but left a tangled web of one claim and another which it is very difficult to make straight. When the grandfather of the present Raja, who is a minor, died, the succession was contested by two brothers, by different mothers who were sisters! and married the same day. (Such is the custom of the tribe.) The elder of the young men, however, though the son of the *elder sister*, was not the heir, because

the father of the ladies had insisted on the youngest daughter who was his favourite, standing or sitting on the Rajah's right hand, while the ceremony was being performed which made her the senior princess, and her offspring, if she had any, heirs to the throne. Accordingly Kistnapa Naik, son of the younger, took precedence of Hunapa Naik, son of the elder, and so it continued till their father's death, when both sent messengers to the Nizam's Court to *bid* for the succession. Kistnapa Naik was recognised as heir by the British Government, and having bid *equal* to the other party was installed in his sovereignty, by the Nizam's Government. The price he paid old Chundoo<sup>3</sup> was enormous, 15 lacs, and somehow or other Mr. Martin<sup>4</sup> then Resident was brought to believe, as he reported, that he thought the sum an equitable accession to the resources of the Nizam's Government, which he ought never to have done, and the Supreme Government said he might take it. Some was paid down, and some remained due which was to be paid by instalments. Now the Nizam's Government had also its claim for Peshkush, which though originally 50,000 Rupees a year had risen by its demands and threats to 2 lacs, and there is no doubt that we were held out *in terrorem* to enforce compliance with the demands on more than one occasion. The Minister Chundoo is not scrupulous about money matters and he knew that the whole Nizam's Irregulars would never take Shorapoor, while one of our Battalions would at any time reduce it, or at any rate enforce compliance. Having sacked all the money he could at first, Chundoo waited a while and then began to dun for his Peshkush, thrusting the treaty into the Resi-

dents face whenever it fell into arrears and requesting assistance. This was always given, and why I know not. Never was it said 'Go and try yourself first and we will help you if you can't get on'. Every time the *kist* (instalment) was in arrears, away went the Muktul<sup>5</sup> Battalion under its officer who was *pro tem* a Political Agent to bully and get the money. Now this led to another mess which was, that the Raja had seldom any, and was obliged to borrow from bankers here, giving them assignments on the revenue. The bankers would not lend without our security, and the officers were directed to sign the bonds. Thus we (*i e* British Government) became security both to the Nizam's Government and the Sahoo-kars, and we took *none* from the ruler of the country, which was a wise trick certainly. This state of matters began in 1842, and continued up to Kistnapa Naik's death 5 months ago. He of late years became drunken and reckless, and his senior wife, a very clever and unscrupulous devil, got all into her hands, and, with a menial whom she had elected to the honorable post of Minister and paramour, blundered on as well as she could. With her private ways we had nothing to do of course, but, when the Government *kist* fell into arrears, nothing was to be done but dun as before, and, this proving unavailing, Frank Gresley<sup>6</sup> an old friend of mine in the Nizam's Cavalry, a very clever fellow and who has always been on civil employ (his mother was a Miss Grote, sister of the Banker, your friend or acquaintance), was sent down to set matters to rights, and make a report on the country. He did the latter very ably, but the former was impossible—the revenue had fallen off, the Ryots absconded, all was managed by the dame and

her man, and there was no getting either at money or satisfaction. Seeing this to be the case Gresley recommended a sequestration of territory equal to a lac of Rupees, to cover the Peshkush, and a perpetual demand of Rs 40,000 to cover the Nazarana, which, by giving over to the Nizam's Government the right of collection of 55,000 Rupees a year, originally blackmail, in the districts about, and abolishing the Minister's fee of 20,000 Rupees a year and 25,000 Rupees durbar expenses, covered the two lacs. There was therefore 60,000 Rupees worth of districts demanded, and others as security for 40,000 more.<sup>7</sup> The districts were yielded very grudgingly by the Raja, who soon after died very suddenly, it is supposed of poison given by the lady, which is as likely as not. The heir was a lad of 8, so during his minority there must be a regent. This place his mother claimed: but Gresley reported that she was so disreputable and her connection with this man of hers so offensive to the family that she should, he thought, be put aside and Pid Naik, the eldest brother of the late man, elected to the office which he was willing to take. He said that the woman would never consent and prepared Fraser by many admirable and keenly written letters for opposition. However warnings were all disregarded, and an order from the Minister and a letter from the Resident sent to the lady, ordering her to give up all to Pid, and obey him. Gresley also wrote that she was to be obedient. Of course she said she would and put her tongue in her cheek, reported that she had attended to the Government's desires, and did nothing of the kind. This Pid wrote to Gresley who at the Resident's request went over to Shorapoor to negotiate,

but again reported it would be of no use without a demonstration of force, and that the woman had at least 1200 armed men, and had bound down the heads of the Beudars, at any rate not to interfere. Fraser told him to go, however, and to leave the place if he could not carry his measures. Well, he went, and again the lady promised what she had the impudence flatly to deny or at least retract the next day, and after a vain attempt at persuasion of her, and finding that she laughed at him, he reported the dirt he had eaten and according to orders came away, fully expecting a return of post would authorize him to call in two Regiments and some Cavalry all within four days march at most, but no! Down came another letter directing him to go again and talk and use a temporizing policy! Which nettled Gresley not a little, and being quite independent (he is going to resign the service next year) he wrote to say he saw no use in his going back, and that all his personal influence had gone and begged to be relieved from the duty. Then he recapitulated all he had ever said from the first about this half and half interference, and pointed out the consequences, that no one would have opposed Pid's appointment if it had been backed by a force to show that orders must be obeyed. Whereas the Ranee had then 1200 men, and when the Kistna and Beema were fordable, there was little doubt that she would be joined by Arab and Rohilla mercenaries which it would require much force to reduce. If ever a man was ashamed of his irresolution it must have been Fraser. He kept the letter 4 days and showed it to no one. On the 5th he sent a note to me through his Military Secretary begging I would come to him imme-



diately, and I went on the 26th or 27th ultimo, not knowing what was to become of me. When we were seated after breakfast at his office table he told me I must prepare to go to Shorapoor directly and then read me Gresley's letters and his own, of late dates, and gave me a volume of correspondence to study. There was no getting out of the orders, but I confess I looked hopelessly at the affair. I was to go, and by judicious advice direct Pid Naik, and explain her false position to the lady. Gresley had done this already, and I really did not know what to say. He assured me however that he would eventually support me with 2000 Infantry if necessary, but I was to get on and eat dirt for two months, and temporize, which was no pleasant prospect. However off I set on the 29th, and, having halted at Muktul 4 days on account of another affair, came on here, and by the way met Gresley who made me more fully acquainted with all matters and his view of them and the intelligence he gave me of the lady's strength of party put to flight any hopes I had of a victory over her. However I was determined I would allow of no compromise, and either I would kick her out or she me, *pro tem*. So I set to work on the 10th, assembled all the people on that day and the 11th, and talked to all till my tongue was dry, sent them away and went to the lady on the 12th, giving her no time to rally the irresolute or wavering, for my talk *had* effect, and she saw that, though the man she hated, *i e* Gresley, on whose departure she fired a salute and distributed sugar and sweetmeats to all her people (the usual mode of rejoicing), had gone, yet his successor had brought the same message. I saw her or rather *spoke to* her on the 13th, and after listening

to a pack of trash and lies for four hours, I gave her three propositions to answer then and there. One that she should give over all the accounts, another the seal of office, and the third the armed men. She promised all, and as far as promises I had got at least as far as Gresley. Next day I began at the end. There was no use asking for accounts while she had 1200 men at her back, and 12,000 of the tribe ready to help them, so I sent for the leaders, required them to give bonds of allegiance to Pid Naik, and the British and Nizam's Governments, and though it was hard work I carried this point most fully by the 16th. One by one the leaders were sent, and I had to screw them out of her, like drops of her blood, but I got all, and on the 20th sent to Hyderabad a paper in the names of all. Meanwhile as I felt my way about the men, so I began to dun for accounts and a pack of trash was, as I expected, sent. I had meanwhile kicked everyone from under Chun Bussapa's<sup>s</sup> feet, and was, as he had no men in his own interest that I cared for and those which had been given by the Ranee having been all withdrawn, ready to seize him. And taking advantage of a visit from the lady's Vakeel, I said I would do so, professing myself perfectly indifferent as to whether he delivered himself up or not, though in reality I was very anxious about the matter, and was afraid of a revulsion to the lady in case I ordered her quondam forces, all I had to depend on. I could not use my own escort of two flank Companies,<sup>9</sup> to seize him by force. I was determined to attempt the measure however in the course of next day, when early in the morning Mr. Bussapa marched into my camp and surrendered himself unconditionally. I have a small matter of the

plunder of a village in the Nizam's Country, done under his own written orders, against him, and that, besides the accounts of the state, was quite enough to justify my detaining him in safe custody. This is the most lawless country I was ever in in India, where there is generally a show of justice. Here they pride themselves on never having had any, and some Beudars exulted to me the other day in relating how this boy's grandfather used sometimes to send for gentlemen down from the Town, to a hill not far off, and have their heads taken off by way of 'look out' for others. The place is the strangest you ever saw, a hole in the middle of rocky hills which rise in a cluster from a flat plain: in the hole is the town which fills it, and to get to it you have to go up a rocky road to each gate, about 3 or 400 feet, then descend into the town. It is a regular freebooter's stronghold and such it always was. *The Beudars have always kept their neighbours at bay* and it is said the tribe were called Bé-dar, without fear, by a Mahomedan king of Beejapur, and hence the present appellation. I hope and trust I shall get out of my first political essay decently. My reports go direct to Lord E. but he is such an odd fellow one would rather be out of his way. Fraser is however civil and has written<sup>10</sup> to me officially, and to Mary privately, to say he is very much satisfied with the work. I will not stop till I walk the lady out of the country to Hyderabad. Here she would only put her finger into every pie and be continually bothering everybody. As to Chun Bussapa he must go certainly. Well I have given you enough of this subject but I wished you to understand my position and to have an inkling of the meddling

nature of our interference, which has so often led us into troubles.

Is the G. G. mad or drunk or what?<sup>11</sup> Do read his Proclamation in Hindee or rather the translation. This will never do. As sure as sure a few more such would set India in a flame, and his Lordship would have to fiddle (it must come) a long time before he could put it out. *Cui bono* all these effusions? Can't he issue common orders instead of Chinese edicts? Pa! Read the proclamation and write one of your severest thunders for the *Times*. If it helped, and I helped, to set him up, we must knock him down. He had far better be doing no mischief in Downing Street than playing old gooseberry here. I am sorry to hear of old Melbourne. Palmerston is running amuck and if he and Hobhouse<sup>12</sup> are not made to answer, and Lord A., for their conduct, the two former especially, it will be very sad. Such a mutilation of correspondence to suit an end would be called scoundrelly and unprincipled in private life, and public life to my idea in its morality requires even greater honour and circumspection. I am glad the *Times* has taken the matter up. I will give the hotheads a dig next month if I can. My being here will not I hope interfere with the letters to the T. The news may not be so late as I could wish but public matters are not affected much by that. I must tell you that there is a chance of my being promoted to the rank of Commandant. Captain Jackson,<sup>13</sup> who commands the 4th, was at Muktl for some time, a year ago, and before that, and in virtue of his command, was Political Agent here whenever needful. So he found there was lots of coin to be had for the asking for and pocketed 25,000 Rupees sharp, and

was in process of getting more when he was accidentally relieved. At Hyderabad he has been incessantly intriguing to get here, no doubt to cover the past, and had he succeeded, being on the lady's side and an active partizan of hers, he would have done that for himself and been right well paid into the bargain by Mr. Chun. I don't see how he is to get off, and hear from Muktul that he is in a bad way. If the Court of Inquiry finds support for the allegations, it is most probable the G.G. will remand him to his Corps which will promote me. I am sorry for his wife but no one pities the man who was always known as an intriguer.

I have sent a note to you, as an introduction to my old friend Outram, who having been used *scurvily* by Lord E. goes home. Outram's services cannot be too highly rated, and he has served through all the Affghan war. As a man then who has seen Cabool and chased Dost Mahomed, and conducted his political negotiations with admirable tact he is at all events a lion and though not given to loud roaring will give you much valuable information. He succeeded Ross Bell who had made a hash of the whole affair. In private life he used to be quiet, and very unobtrusive and I don't doubt is so now, at any rate I beg your kind offices. I am sure you will like him. He knew Burnes *well* and could tell you personally about the mutilated correspondence.

P.S. A despatch from General Fraser has just reached me and though it may savour of vanity I can't refrain from sending you an extract as regards my proceedings. In allusion to three letters he says.

'These despatches demand from me nothing further at

present than the expression of my entire approbation of the temper, judgement, and firmness which you are exhibiting in the discharge of the duty now entrusted to you: and it will be very gratifying to me to be able to report to the Supreme Government my expectation that under your judicious management, the affairs of the Shorapoor State may finally be arranged in a satisfactory manner, without any necessity for our having recourse to arms.'

This is very gratifying as he will write civilly to Lord E. about me. All will go on smoothly now I hope as I have got the cause of all safe, and the only danger is that the men I have bound down may turn round. This however is not I think likely as the soldiery always keep *within* promises.

<sup>1</sup> Taylor, in his letters, generally writes the word as 'Beudar', though in the Autobiography he prefers 'beydar'.

<sup>2</sup> *Peshcush*, Persian *pesh-kash*, or first-fruits. Used to mean any quit-rent for land, or payment in substitution for military service.

<sup>3</sup> Chandoo, i.e. Chandu Lal (1766-1845), for over thirty years the able, if somewhat notorious, Minister of the Nizam.

<sup>4</sup> William Byam Martin of the Bengal Civil Service who was Resident from September 1825 to August 1830.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. the battalion at Muktul, the station of the Nizam's contingent nearest to Shorapur.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Gresley (1807-80), Major of the 14th Bengal N.I. He served with the Nizam's cavalry from 1826 till his retirement early in 1844. His uncle, George Grote, was the father of the historian of ancient Greece.

<sup>7</sup> The meaning of this complicated explanation seems to be that the demand of the Nizam's Government for 2 lacs annually was to be met by (a) reserving the revenue of certain land to provide a *pesh-kash* of Rs60,000, (b) reserving the revenue of other land to provide Rs40,000 to meet *nazarana*, i.e. payment on succession or recognition, (c) allowing the Nizam's Government to collect Rs55,000 in the districts not so reserved, (d) abolishing the Minister's fee, and reducing Darbar expenses

to the amount of Rs45,000. The total of these items is equal to the original demand of 2 lacs, or Rs200,000.

<sup>9</sup> The Rani's favourite, previously referred to.

<sup>9</sup> It appears from the Autobiography that these two companies belonged to his old regiment, the 6th Infantry.

<sup>10</sup> For the letters see pages 151 and 152 of the Autobiography.

<sup>11</sup> The reference is to Lord Ellenborough's proclamation after the return of the army from Afghanistan.

<sup>12</sup> Sir John Hobhouse. See Letter 3, note 5.

<sup>12</sup> Captain W. B. Jackson (1805-69) of the Madras army, serving with the Nizam's army till his retirement in 1846. A Commission was appointed to inquire into the charges against him.

## LETTER 17

[Taylor writes, still happily engrossed with his new duties. In his reference to affairs in India it is interesting to note that even at this stage, when Charles Napier was still negotiating with the Amirs of Sind through Outram, the probability of a war was evident, and doubts had arisen whether there was any justification for it.]

*Shorapoor 22nd January 1843*

Since I wrote I have been hard at work, and have succeeded beyond my hopes peacefully. I have established the Government of Raja Pid Naik to the utter discomfiture of the lady, and have made her pay a lac of Rupees out of two that she owes, to her infinite disgust, but to do this has been no little trouble I can assure you. Nor was it till I told this troublesome woman that I should send for a force to compel her to come to terms that she would listen to any reason at all in regard to the money which she herself promised. Having worked like a slave for about 20 days, she one day sent me word that she would pay the lac, if her man was unconditionally restored to her, and she was allowed to do just as she pleased in the administration of the country. This after I had fined her man and pretty well kicked him down stairs was cool, and

I suspected she had secretly got over some of the Sebunde<sup>1</sup>es, which proved to be the case privately though they dared not avow her cause openly. I knew the gentleman was at the bottom of this, so I gave him a ride to Lingsoogoor<sup>2</sup> one of our stations 40 miles off with an escort of Cavalry. I started him at night, as I had heard that about 300 men had sworn to the woman to carry him off from my camp, and they might have done this in a night surprise. 200 did I know get as far as the gate of the town one dark night; but as it was a mile nearly from there to my camp, their hearts failed them and they returned. The morning after the gentleman had gone, the Ranee was very furious, and some little slaves of hers, Abyssinian boys, loaded their guns and swore they would shoot everybody and me in particular but the Sebunde<sup>1</sup>es and Rohillas<sup>3</sup> were firm and in a day or two she was very humble again. I had fear however of a row between her partizans and Pid Naik's, and wanted to get rid of the whole, so, as Fraser had put a force at my disposal, the 2nd and 6th Nizam's Infantry, 26th Madras, and a Regiment and a half of Cavalry with Guns in proportion, a pretty little Army to direct, I sent for a brigade, and a Regiment and the Guns moved to the Kistna 14 miles to the south. As the Brigade advanced my policy became bolder, and I demanded all the arrears according to the showing of *her own* accounts, amounting to 2 lacs 20,000 Rupees, and also that all the armed men, including the garrison of Wondroog, a strong fort with a wet ditch not far from here, should attend on me to be discharged. These fellows coquetted with me for three days and I was obliged to send them a message to say if they did not



come I must go and fetch them. And they came, about 500 sturdy well armed fellows, who would have given a deal of trouble had they remained obstinate in the fort which could only have been taken by regular approaches. I shall give the lady another sad blow tomorrow, as, if she does not give the money or account for it, all her Jagheer<sup>d</sup> villages are to be occupied by parties of Cavalry, whom I have all ready to slip. If she writes to me again today as she did yesterday, and if her people make a row anywhere, I suppose we shall have to go and see what is the matter with them. I do not expect any trouble, however, now, all having given in here, and the whole of the armed men being encamped close to me, 1500 or thereabouts. With these chaps I have become very good friends and their Jemadars come and sit in my tent when they like and tell me long yarns about tigers and hogs which they are fond of slaying. So far as I have gone then all has been well. I had hoped to do everything by negotiation but matters got to a ticklish point and if I had gone back at all we must have come to fisticuffs in the end. Therefore a force was needful to look on only, and bloodshed has been spared. Prevention is better than cure in most cases. Fraser is very civil, sends me plenty of encouragement and has cried me up to the Supreme Government, i.e. Lord Ellenborough. What is intended to be done here in the future policy I do not know, but I do not see how interference can be withdrawn as we have interfered so far. Not to have interfered would have been impossible on account of the Government claims and those of the Bankers for which we are security. Therefore I presume we shall go on and if I could be empowered to make a

proper revenue settlement of the country I am sure I could raise its revenue very considerably in a few years, and if we could get the State out of debt during the young Raja's minority it would be a good thing. The worst of the matter would be the lonely life, but they would give me better pay if my appointment was permanent, and that would make amends. I shall not grumble however, so long as it is not less than a thousand rupees but they gave Gresley 1700. He would not stir a foot until Fraser promised him 500 in addition to his Paymastership.

News there is none this month, all sorts of feasting and nonsense at Ferozepoor, and no Sikhs after all. Well I suppose it is all right, but we shall see by and bye how they behave themselves when our backs are turned. I wrote to you last month about Outram, and thought he would have been with you ere this; but he was too valuable a man to be dispensed with in the Scinde crisis, and when he had made every preparation to go home, was hurried off then to manage matters with the Ameers. How he has fared has not yet appeared, but there seemed much probability of old Sir Charles Napier coming to blows with them, and the forces were concentrated. If there is a fight there will be only one, and Hyderabad<sup>s</sup> will be ours. I don't know what quarrel we have with the Ameers, however, except that they don't like giving up territory and forts for the mere asking, but all will be explained one of these days.

Mary does not leave Hyderabad till the 1st February, so I heard today, and will not be here before the 15th. It will be pretty hot by then, and will get worse and worse for many a day before there is a drop of rain. I hear there

is a fine old Mausoleum at Suggur a town 6 miles off which I shall convert into a habitation if possible during the hot weather and rains, at others seasons Tents are very pleasant.

<sup>1</sup> Sibandi, a term applied to irregular native soldiery employed for police or revenue duties. The name is probably derived from the term used for a periodical payment of revenue, which the men were employed to collect or protect. The word is still used for the irregular soldiers in some Indian States.

<sup>2</sup> Lingsugur, a town, long a cantonment for a regiment of the Nizam's army.

<sup>3</sup> Rohillas, literally hill-men, here and generally throughout southern India used for all Pathans.

<sup>4</sup> Jaghir. An assignment of land, given to members of a ruling family for maintenance, or to individuals for good service.

<sup>5</sup> Hyderabad, in Sind, the capital of the Amirs.

## LETTER 18

[It is unnecessary to reproduce the bulk of this letter which was written on receipt of the news that Henry Reeve's wife had died soon after the birth of her child. Taylor's own news is scanty. The 'sad, sad regent' is Pid Naik, the uncle of the child Raja.]

*Shorapoor, 20th Feby. 1843*

News I have none to give you—except that all has gone on quietly here—I have reduced the armed men by one half, and am busy in trying to introduce some order with the very worst administration I ever saw, but my power is cramped, and I cannot do all I could wish. I am about to apply for permission to make a revenue settlement of the country which will keep me employed, and trust to hold on here for some time. My troublesome Rance came the other day and threw herself at my feet whether I would or no, and we had the quarrel out. She was very penitent and is now my particular friend; she

sees what a fool she has been plainly enough, and having burnt her fingers will meddle no more with politics. She is ugly and small, and though sharp enough in no way interesting. I have a sad sad *Regent* however—so weak, so hard either to lead or drive, that I am sorely puzzled what to do sometimes—I could take all the power myself if I chose, but the mischief of that would be that I should make enemies for him if I were withdrawn, and till my foot is sure, my policy is very cautious. He was none of my choosing—and it is a thousand pities when the Ranee was declared unfit to hold the power, that an English Officer was not appointed at once during the boy's minority. Good would have been done by this—now our interference is of very questionable benefit.

My wife and bairn joined me on the 18th. and are hearty and well. Believe me, dear Henry, that her warm heart has felt and still feels deeply for you.

## LETTER 19

[Taylor's letter for March is missing. In it he must have referred to the war started in Sind by Sir Charles Napier and to the striking victory won at Miani on 17 February. The battle mentioned in this letter is that of Hyderabad, or Dubba as it was called at first, fought on 24 March. Outram had started for England immediately after Miani, and was soon to be involved in his wordy warfare with Sir Charles and his historian brother Sir William Napier. Taylor's forebodings for the future of Sind were remarkably incorrect. Napier governed it as a military dictatorship. His revenue system was defective but he maintained order and the inhabitants of the country settled down with contentment under British rule.

Taylor had by now become entirely critical of Lord Ellenborough's actions and was evidently less restrained in his letters to *The Times* than its editor thought desirable.]

*Shorapoor 24th April 1843*

I send this month the news of another battle in Sindh wherein both parties fought right well. The Beloches cannot stand against us, poor devils, and the more they stand the more of them are killed. I wish they would run away. We cannot give up the country now, and all we can hope is that as little blood as possible may be shed in its occupation. How Sir Charles is to manage it I don't know—who is to advise him—who to carry on the Civil affairs—who to assess the country—who to collect the revenue? Yet Lord E. has jumped to all sorts of conclusions at once and abolished slavery when he held no more of the country than his military camps. I wd. not be a Civil Officer or a revenue collector in that country for some years—it will be the Ireland of India.

There is nothing of much interest this month—we rather expect a return from England and expect Lord E.'s recall every mail. If this proclamation fever does not determine you all to take care of his health in England, you will not be wise—for what with this newly latent desire of his for military glory, and the fever besides, we shall see him getting one quarrel after another on his hands till he is embroiled with all our neighbours, and he is now so strong that he must be tempted to bully.

Outram went home by last mail and I hope he will long ere this have been with you, and I hope you will know him. We have not met for many years, but he is a noble little fellow and though of little stature has a great soul and a gallant one. I wish they would knight him, if he wd. be knighted, out of respect to him and to show Governors General that they ought not to neglect men

such as Outram, nor treat him with petty spite—I don't write of him because he is an old friend, but look at the man's work when Ross Bell left matters in confusion and when the outbreak at Cabool might have spread to Belochistan and Sinde, and bothered the Indian Government more than it did.

As I wrote to you last month I should, I have submitted a report on the state of affairs here.—Since then the Regent has paid over to me 80,000 Rs for the Nizam's Govt., which I have remitted. The Nizam's Govt. due is 140,000 and it should have got a lakh, but money has been wasted before my eyes and I have had no power to prevent it—wasted too by the men whom we put up to save it.—Whether he had written or not on the subject I should have done so to the effect that he was not fit for the charge we had thrust on him, but, as he found himself in the arrangement of the financial affairs perfectly helpless and a party working against him which he could not overcome or control, he has thrown himself upon us, and made an official application to the Resident and Govt. of India for the State to be taken under the Resident's control during the minority of his nephew. He has done wisely I think and if it is refused he ought to resign. If he does not, and money is wasted again or his neglect is apparent in management, I have little doubt the Company will lay hands on the country and annex it to Bombay, though they wd. have no more right to do so, than we to take America or any other country without reason.—My letter went to Hyderabad some days ago, and there is time for an answer but none has arrived; I suppose they are thinking over the affair. Whatever Fraser

thinks, my letter must go on to the G.G. who may or may not support me. I have sent the rough copy to Gresley who does not agree with me; however, he has evidently misunderstood me on one or two material points which I have explained.

I hope I shall have good news about the permanency of the post to send you next mail; I may even have to write in the trouble and hard work of revenue settlements; but of this more then. If an officer is not to remain here permanently I must be kept till all the questions connected with these late affairs are settled and this must take some time yet. If I am withdrawn I must fall back on Regimental duty, but I won't think of that.

The castigation of Lord E. in the whole of the English papers is delightful. You will see the proclamations and notifications are going on. What a vol. they will make.—Will the Cabinet support him? We are all very anxious on this head and as to whether he is to remain or not.

I thought I wd. wait till dinner was over and send my post off—and have been rewarded, the basket came in as we sat down. I have followed your caution about the letters, but I have railed again at Lord E. and will do so, print or not as you please. I will write honestly or not at all; I dare say D.<sup>1</sup> was right about the November letters, but that of December was worse I suspect.

<sup>1</sup> D., i.e. J. T. Delane, editor of *The Times* from 1841 to 1877.

## L E T T E R 20

[In this letter, written very soon after the previous one, Taylor continues his disparaging remarks on the policy of Lord Ellenborough. The view taken by him has been generally endorsed by historians. It may, however, be said on Lord Ellenborough's behalf that much of his apparent vacillation was due to a desire to give the Generals a free hand, and that, when their decision was arrived at, he supported them with vigour.]

*Shorapoor 7th May 1843*

I was not, I will own, prepared for a vote of thanks to Lord Ellenborough, though I was to the Army—I cannot see how he applied the resources of the country to the critical period—first he wrote *with his Council* that an advance ought to be made; this was Lord Auckland's policy. Then all April, May and June he did nothing except give orders and counter-orders. till Sir Jasper Nicolls,<sup>1</sup> fairly tired out, gave up all interference with the forces. Then his orders to Nott and Pollock to retire—only prevented by their urgent representations to be allowed to advance. Then the final order, can it be called one, in which one distinctly sees that the Generals go on on their own responsibility. Now if Lord E. had followed up his first intentions, pushed on supplies and carriage to advance, not to retire, the whole thing would have been over in July, instead of which you know the armies got through the passes with the snow at their heels and the evacuation of Cabool, so rapidly made was it, looked more like a precipitate retreat than a voluntary act. For the life of me I can't see what Lord E. has done to deserve thanks on a point of such moment. I conclude however that it is a party question or that Parliament could not



separate the authorities. Had Lord E. followed up his first letter, he would have been justly thanked as head of all, and the Generals as his subordinates. Now it appears to me that the Generals have won all the credit and he could not be left out because it was not regular or because it would have been a breach of etiquette. The effect of the thanks has not altered the tone of the Indian press, which, with every item of the affairs at its fingers' ends and the blue book besides, is harder than ever upon the Lord. Now we are looking for the Gates<sup>2</sup> debate with anxiety—there will nothing come of it I know, but if it marks public feeling strongly it may cure Ld E. of that cursed vanity and presumption of his which is doing vast mischief. Certes he has done *no good*. Except resolving on the Ganges Canal, and I suppose sanctioning the Slavery Abolition Act, which had been determined on long ago, what has he done? Bundelkhand is in a worse mess than ever I suspect, and we shall see what May and June bring forth in the way of insurrection.

I must trust to Mr. Delane's judgement in regard to my letters. Pray assure him I write from honest conviction and without prejudice! If I could praise the G.G. I would with all my heart. I am sure I did at first, not believing the *on dits* about the vacillation, etc., which were then current, and which I had from the best private sources. I defended his proclamation and will laud him to the skies if I can find an opportunity to do so, but it must be honestly done. I see no opening at present but am on the watch for one; for instance if he would introduce a severe policy in regard to those execrable little States in Bundelkhand, and smash one or two of them

with a high hand he would do good, but he does not, he conciliates, diplomatizes and humbugs.

Why does he not follow up a spirited para in one of his proclamations to the effect that he would utterly destroy any state which should dare to lift its head against the Govt.? What appears to me, as I write it, mild enough here, may not seem so to you, or perhaps Delane, if you are within reach before it is printed. I do not think I have been too severe about the Gates, never was such utter *folly* perpetrated by any Statesman before.

I have heard nothing in answer to my report on Shorapoor affairs except that the General has forwarded it to the Govr. General together with all my private letters on the subject which he considered important. I don't know that Lord E. will thank him for this for the report was rather a long one. If my suggestions are approved of, I suppose I shall have to stay and see them set going or rather set them agoing myself—if not, it is most likely I shall be told to wind up present negotiations and withdraw.

Capt. Jackson's<sup>3</sup> bribery case has not been decided yet which is very hard. Lord E. could have surely given an answer in a week, or referred it to a Court Martial. Whether he is turned out or not, I believe I may tell you that I am pretty sure of a Regiment. A Captain Doveton,<sup>4</sup> Comg. the 7<sup>th</sup>, a man who has always been at nasty tricks, has gone too far at last, and in some disputes with his officers charges were sent against him: on which I hear he sent in his resignation of the service. The man is a proprietor of E. I. Stock and very rich, so that no one will try to stop him I think. If I am promoted I shall hope to

remain here at any rate till things are working rightly; a new hand now, without he was not very careful, wd. make a mess of it. If I stay and am promoted too, I dare say I shall be better paid than I am now. So I will hope for the best and be content with what I can get. We are very well in spite of the hot weather. My tent is surrounded with wetted grass screens, and we have no end of capital mangoes from my old friend the Ranee. I wish I could send you a few, they are in taste *most exquisite*.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Jasper Nicolls, see Letter 9, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> The Gates. This refers to the grandiloquence and display of the Governor-General on the occasion of the return to India of the Gates of Somnath, taken over 800 years previously. The effect of this triumph was marred by the discovery that the gates brought with infinite trouble from Ghazni were certainly not those taken from Somnath.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Jackson's case, see Letter 16, note 13. Finally a Court of Inquiry, and not a court martial, was held.

<sup>4</sup> Captain John Doveton, an officer of mixed descent in the Nizam's army. Dying in 1853, he left £50,000 for the benefit of the Eurasian community in Madras and Calcutta. One reason for his wealth may be found in a letter, dated 13 November 1840, from Colonel Bagnold to his wife. 'Captain Doveton is a capital working hand at a Committee, but he came in common Kodder inexpressibles, as coarse as my horse cloths.' Kodder is the material since made famous by Mr. Gandhi as 'Khadar': a flower of which Captain Doveton sowed an early seed.

## LETTER 21

[Taylor writes with natural exultation that the Governor-General, as well as the Resident, had approved of his view that the Regent Pid Naik was incompetent to manage the State and that a European officer was required. The dispatches will be found at pages 160-2 of the Autobiography. In the dispatch from the Government of India it is stated that the Governor-General has much satisfaction in seeing the difficult task of restoring the State of Shorapur to its previous good condition confided to Captain Taylor, whose good disposition, ability, and discretion had been manifested in all his transactions. After this, Taylor naturally thought his continuance in the post for a number of years to be assured.]

In spite of Lord Ellenborough's kind words, Taylor continues to disapprove of his policy.]

*Shorapoor 11th June 1943*

You will be as glad as I was to read the enclosed copy of a dispatch from Lord Ellenborough to General Fraser in reply to my report which I before mentioned to you; annexed to it is also a copy of all of Fraser's last dispatch which relates to the subject and both are alike gratifying to me. To have carried my point at all ought to be received as a subject for thankful reflection to me. How much this is enhanced by the laudations from high quarters I leave you to imagine. I am now therefore at rest about the stability of my appointment; it must continue till the young Raja is of age, and I must remain here to work out my measures of improvement and amelioration of the condition of the people during this period, without indeed I am moved elsewhere, an event not likely to occur in the small field of the Nizam's service. You will see that Lord E. has entered with regret into the arrangement. This I was prepared to hear. He thought no doubt that once Pid Naik was established and my friend the Ranee put down, all would go on smoothly; and so it would have done had Pid possessed any personal influence, character, ability or application—but he has none of these in the most mediocre degree even, and, had I been withdrawn, Government would have been bothered by constant applications to repress dirty factious intrigues. Pid would have trembled at his own shadow. Any one who could take it would have had power, and as he would have done nothing without the aid of the Sahoukars (Bankers) so they would have screwed him unmercifully, and not

only him but the country at large by their frightfully oppressive usury. The truth of the matter is, Gresley was sick of the business, he wanted to wash his hands of the affair altogether and in the late Raja's time there were so many considerations against interference, as tending to bring this Govt. into collision with him, that, though he laid the subject of interference before Govt. he argued against it, and no doubt properly. But when the Raja died and left his heir a minor, I think he ought to have counselled bolder measures. I would have done so at any rate. Gresley, however, urged by the representations of an intriguing Banker here, whose latter conduct has shown that he only sought his own aggrandisement as he knew Pid would move only at his bidding, and well knowing that if he took the affairs in hand he wd. not be relieved from them for some years, proposed Pid to the Resident and eventually he was confirmed by the Resident and the Supreme Government. G.'s unsuccessful attempt to set up Pid led to my appointment and I brought the Governor General's confirmation of him with me. The first sight of the man was enough to assure one that nothing could be made of him, and his helplessness became latterly so apparent in a thousand instances, that knowing this I think I should have fairly laid myself open to an accusation of want of foresight had I not reported what I saw, and had been withdrawn. I therefore wrote the Report which I told Pid of. He, in a mortal fright that he was about to be abandoned, seconded the letter by one from himself to the Resident wherein he very fairly stated the difficulties he laboured under. In my report, I placed Gresley's arguments against interference

in juxtaposition with my own sentiments, and so the G.G. had every opportunity afforded him of coming to a fair conclusion. I see by his letter that it was not his intention to have withdrawn me in any case; probably had I known this I should not have written as soon as I did: But my other negotiations were coming to a close, and the impression at Hyderabad was that on their termination would ensue the cessation of all further interference; so Malcolm<sup>1</sup> the Asst. Resident wrote to me long ago, and from what I could learn from Mr. Palmer and others it seemed to be generally understood. Now, however, all is changed, Fraser's support of my view, I suspect, decided the Govr. General, and the affair is as you see it. You will see that they have given me no instructions whatever. I take this as a mark of confidence which I am prepared to do my utmost to maintain. True, instructions would have relieved me of much anxiety and much responsibility but I do not shrink from either, and as I have baked my cake so I must eat it. I have certainly hope that I may save this little State from ruin, and that I may be able gradually to introduce some kind of order where there has been none for the last fifty years and more. The little Raja will be duly placed on his Guddee<sup>2</sup> on the 13th, and I am in hopes that this act on the part of the Supreme Govt. will assure the family and the people that no appropriation of their country is intended. I have been anxious that this ceremony should take place for a long time, and confess I was more than pleased at the consideration which prompted Lord Ellenborough to direct me, on the part of the Govt. to take a prominent share in it. After it is over I shall begin my work, and I

think this will be best done by looking through the country and examining into the state of revenue engagements. These have been sadly neglected and hundreds of Ryots<sup>a</sup> have gone into the Company's country. I think many of these will return when they are assured of good treatment. True the rainy season is commencing and I may be driven back, but I must do as much as I can for this is the ploughing season and if I can get a good deal of waste land under cultivation at a low rent, it will yield me good returns next year. I shall also have to build a house which will cost money and trouble both; meanwhile, though we are still in our tents, an old native gentleman has kindly lent me his house, where we shall do well enough till the rains are over. The climate certainly agrées with us famously, and as soon as we are settled, we have every prospect of being very comfortable. The life will be a lonely one, but we are prepared for that, and I have many sources of pleasant occupation. They have said nothing about an increase of pay, but I may fairly hope. I think Gresley had 2000 Rupees a month, for doing less than I do. Two commandants of Regiments are in sad trouble and they say both must go; if so, I am sure of a corps, and its allowances with these would give me 1600 Rupees a month with which I should be perfectly content, for we can live very well on four or five hundred, the saving from the rest would tell well in 7 or 8 years and give me good hope of a final return to you. I have written to my father, of course, but as the letter to him is a bulky one, I shall send it by Falmouth; please therefore drop him a line to the effect that I have been permanently fixed here. I am afraid the T. letter will be

a barren one this month for news there is none, and the Indian papers are barren all. An Act appointing Deputy Magistrates is a good one and, if Lord E.'s doing, deserves great credit. This step in the improvement of the police is a large one, but the native portion of it is shameful, and loudly cries for rectification. Sinde is feverish of course but there has been no more fighting. Lord E. has stood out the hot weather at Agra, but indeed there has been little or no heat this year in comparison. I was vastly amused by Lord E.'s champion the Duke, taking up the Gates proclamation as a 'song of triumph' a most novel ingenious and rich idea. Pray get someone to set it to music, and then the Italian boys could grind it about the streets to the glorification of both. All the proceedings in your Houses only prove what no one I suppose doubted before, that if a man has a strong party at his back he may commit any tomfoolery he pleases. The Gates are at Agra and I hope the white ants may eat them.

<sup>1</sup> Duncan Archibald Malcolm (1807-55) of the Bombay army, a nephew of Sir John Malcolm. He died when a Lieutenant-Colonel and Resident at Baroda. Colonel Bagnold, whose comments in his letters to his wife, meant only for her eye, are generally caustic about the members of Hyderabad Society, writes about Malcolm and his wife 'They are the only steady and sensible people here. I like them much.' Dr. Maclean calls him 'in every way a most genial and lovable man'.

<sup>2</sup> *Guddee* or *gadi*, literally cushion, i.e. throne of a ruler. The ceremony of enthronement did not mean any access of power, the Raja being a child.

<sup>3</sup> *Ryot*, a cultivator or tenant of the soil.



## LETTER 22

[Taylor had been obliged to go to Hyderabad to give evidence regarding the charges against Captain W. B. Jackson. Taylor's position in the matter must have been difficult. He evidently thought that the charges were true. We learn, however, from Colonel Bagnold's letters to his wife that Jackson had sought the assistance of William Palmer. Bagnold was himself a member of the Commission of Inquiry. He writes to his wife, 'Jackson has got hold of William Palmer, a noted hand at this sort of thing'; and again, 'I suspect Bullock and Palmer are advising him [Jackson] badly.' The finding of the Commission is not recorded, but it would appear that the charges were not found to be proved, as Jackson remained in the service, though he retired within three years. Bagnold tells us that the accounts in the case were very complicated and were written in several Indian languages.

This letter indicates how unsatisfactory Taylor found his surroundings after his visit to England and the wider circle of interests he had there entered.]

*Hyderabad August 19th 1843*

I am *much* obliged to you for your 2nd letter—I own that I have written far more than I need have done regarding Lord Ellenborough's follies and when I think on his kindness to me in his official capacity I am ashamed. I confess, however that I could not bear to see one of whom I thought and wrote so highly at first, commit himself by such puerile acts as those of the Gates and other matters, and my opinion is and was so strong against his policy in regard to Scinde, even before I heard from Outram, that I was vexed to the heart. I will be more careful in future, and this month's letter will show you that I adhere to orders as a good soldier ought to do. In truth there is little to say perhaps, but I have been anxious about the Punjab, and look on matters there as by no means secure. There will inevitably be a

flare up between Shere Sing and his minister, and as the latter has become so powerful there can only be one result, war; they may however struggle on for a while but it cannot last long. I wrote a fair eulogy, I think, on the G.G.'s beneficial measures regarding the administration of India, and I hope that was acceptable; in truth I was delighted to find subjects on which I could express myself with a conviction of their use and benefit to the people. I shall be more in search of these than of others, and I am convinced that, as the G.G. has, as it were, sown his wild oats, he will be more circumspect in future.

And now for a few words of myself and my prospects which it will rejoice you to hear are brighter than when I last wrote to you. I told you I was ordered up here as a witness on that miserable affair of Capt. Jackson's, relative to bribery at Shorapoor—We arrived here on the 19th July and I gave my evidence a few days after. I was however directed to remain till all evidence was taken, and I was glad of this, as it afforded me an opportunity of having my position and authority at Shorapoor defined officially by General Fraser. I had much ado to effect this. Fraser is a man with a high reputation; how gained I know not; but whether from increasing age, or any other cause, a man more afraid of responsibility I never met with. He affected to understand the letter of the G.G. which I sent you, as not giving the Agent at Shorapoor complete authority, but he was made sensible of his mistake and has addressed a letter to Pid Naik explaining to him that he holds a subordinate position to me, and that I am to have the control and direction of everything, preserving him as the Executive so long as his conduct

warrants the confidence of the Supe. Govt. I am therefore now in my proper position, and I think I have tact enough and knowledge of the people to manage matters easily to all. I will tell you next month how I speed in *my Govt.* and what I intend to do—all is very simple, but there are 800,000 people or thereabouts to govern and I will aim at making them as peaceful and happy as I can.

An officer, Capt. Doveton, has resigned, and, the officer senior to me having preferred to retain his staff appointment, he has been passed over, and I shall be in general orders as Capt. Commandant, I hope in a month more, the recommendation of my promotion having gone to Lord Ellenborough. The allowances of a Capt. are 1000 Rupees a month in addition to which Genl. Fraser has very handsomely settled on my appt. 500 more which I now draw as a Civil allowance. This gives me a handsome and very competent income. I can live on 500, so that I shall be able for the first time in my life to lay by with hope of Home and all its happiness. The minority of the Raja must last for 7 or 8 years and my savings, if no sickness and absence intervenes, ought to tell by that period and render me independent. I have now Hope, and may God accomplish its fulfilment.

I cannot thank you enough for your thoughts of something permanent for me in England. The knowledge that you have this interest in my welfare never leaves me. How willingly I would resign comparative wealth here for a certainty in England, you well know. We may have wealth here, but with it such poverty of enjoyment that it would be gladly resigned. We do but little more than exist as animals, and it is only, in such a place as I have,

that this existence is rendered tolerable by the conviction that good to a large mass may be done, and that there is hope of provision for the future comfort. I have never ceased to be thankful that I came home to you all when I did, and that my knowledge and affection for you, gives me an incitement to exertion which I never knew before.

Since I wrote this two hours ago the Calcutta papers have arrived with the notification of the G.G.'s intention of discontinuing the system of advances on the hypothecation of goods to the E.I. Company. I shall therefore shortly notice this most wise act in the T-letter and pray you send me any *Times* articles on the subject; you can cut them out if you cannot send the paper. I have several times asked Delane to send the papers with Indian articles in them, but he does not, and I have no other means of seeing them—as the Indian Papers don't copy them. They would be of great use to me as informing me of your opinions. I suppose Lord E. wishes to make India free of the E.I. Co., and gradually to stop connection with it—I think he is right and this as a preliminary measure is capital.

## LETTER 23

[Taylor, though engrossed in his work, was naturally interested in the change of Ministers at Hyderabad. Chandu Lal had long been supported by the Indian Government and by the Resident, but the affairs of the State had got into such confusion that a change was necessary; and he had also lost the confidence of the Nizam. The story will be found in the *Life of General Fraser*. After Chandu Lal had tendered his resignation he was very unwilling to go, and intrigued for a return to power after his successors had been appointed, though he had been given a monthly pension of Rs30,000. As Taylor anticipated, he did not long survive his retirement, dying about eighteen months later.]

*Camp, Narribole, 24th Sept. '43*

I am obliged to write rather early in the month as I am out on some district work and my letters have a long way to travel to Lingsoogoor to be forwarded to Bombay, and for fear of delays I must start them sooner than usual that they may be in time. You will see by this that I have taken charge of affairs here, and, having delivered my credentials to old Pid Naik, have become the actual manager of affairs—As I expected, however, my work has not been altogether smooth, nor will it be for some time. Shorapoor contains about as vagabond a set of Brahmins as exist in the Deccan<sup>1</sup> and that is saying a great deal—and as these fellows hold Pid Naik's soul in their keeping and terrify him out of his wits, so it is difficult to counteract the pernicious influence at present. That I shall be able to do it by degrees I do not doubt but at first it is rather uphill work. I have not been here long enough however to give a fair chance to any one. I reached Shorapoor on the 1st Sept. and for some days was too busy with accounts to attend to general matters. After I had got a fair estimate of the revenue, I then began to put matters in order, and having done so much was obliged to come into the country to meet an agent of the Nizam's Govt., to arrange compensation for some depredations said to have been committed by the Beudars on this border, and to make up some differences between a Collector<sup>2</sup> and some of his villages with whom he was at issue. All this will be finished in a few days and then I shall return to Shorapoor for the festival of the Dussera and probably remain till my wife is able to leave Hyderabad on her way to join me. We shall then betake our-

selves to the country and travel about for some time, for I cannot defer a settlement of the revenue and it will also be the season of collection ; I must look after 'the rint' as well as keep the people in good humour—and indeed it will require some trouble this year I much fear, for we are very sadly off for rain. There has been a long and unusual drought, which, if it continues, will be very sad. I hope and trust however that it may pour. September is often a dry month and if it rains in October it brings on the cotton, wheat and other grains which ripen in February and March—We have had a little rain, within the last few days, and it is as hot and stewing all day as though it would pour soon.

I am pitched on the bank of the Bheema, now a noble stream as wide as the Thames and perhaps here as deep, not very muddy at present as there has been such dry weather, but enough to prove that at its source there is rain enough. If it would continue in this fashion, we might have boats on it, but three months hence it will be fordable, and the rocks in the bed which are now invisible would render any idea of a boat except in the deep pools absurd. If we had only navigation to the heart of the Dekhan, what facilities it would afford for taking cotton to the coast, of which we could grow vast quantities more than we do even in this little State, and how much the articles of produce would improve. At present the people only cultivate as much as will pay their rent and fill their bellies, and leave the rest to chance. The grain grown is that which takes least trouble and though it grows cheaper every year, they have had no idea of cultivating a superior kind which would given them surer

and more profitable returns. I hope in a few years to help them on a bit, but it is sad uphill work overcoming prejudice in people so neglected as these have been, and time and patience must be largely expended. I find with a good season I ought to collect 2 lacs and 40,000 Rs here, and as a vast deal of land is out of cultivation, I hope by giving low but increasing leases for it, to bring back the people who have emigrated on account of the oppression which has been practised, and to increase the revenue at any rate a lakh more. This is what I hope at any rate, and a few seasons will prove what I can make of it. I have fairly begun our house on the hill, and left the basement which is about 4 feet high all finished—The walls are begun too, and I had got beams and door posts all ready. I am building with granite which the men of the country work very cleverly in to pieces about as large again as an English brick and all for 8 Rupees a thousand! My house cannot therefore cost much in building and I expect to finish it for 2000 Rupees. I enclose a slip with a plan of it for your edification.

We have had a quiet little revolution at Hyderabad, that is, old Chundoo Lall has been obliged to resign his absolute Ministership—and two noblemen have been appointed, one a Mahomedan the other a Hindoo, who are acting a good deal under Genl. Fraser's directions and I hope will do; anything is better for the country than the late management, and Chundoo Lall's mind and credit were alike exhausted. He was an able man in his day there is no doubt, but he had broken within the last four years, and his unscrupulous desire of money to squander away on all sorts of rascally Gossains, Byragees and

Fakeers<sup>3</sup>. Whoever pretended to see a vision of heaven in which Chundoo Lall was seated along with Hindoo or Mahomedan sages and holy persons, was sure to receive large presents, or, if the knave was a cleverer one than usual, he got a jahgeer (a village) of a thousand Rupees a year, settled on him for life. Such instances are numerous beyond belief and the anecdotes which led to them most amusing. I don't think the old man will live long now, he was too much absorbed in his work to bear its sudden cessation. His deserted Durbar will be his death.

I expect my wife about the end of October. I am thankful to hear by every letter that she is strong and our gypsy sort of life always agrees with her. We talk of going over to Beejapoor<sup>4</sup> but we have not settled that yet, it depends on the work I have to do. I don't think we shall go to Hyderabad for some time: I have had enough of unsettled work these last three years or nearly so to last a long time. My wife has received the box and has sent 'Ally'<sup>5</sup> to me. I can hardly look at it, it is so miserably sad in expression; I can recognize a feature here and there but the whole distresses me. I will have a good picture of her which will be a luxury. A thousand thanks for all you have sent, which I shall not see till Mary comes down. I will then try your flies and report the result.

<sup>1</sup> The uncertainty of the spelling of Indian words at this time is shown by Taylor in the same letter using the forms 'Deccan' and 'Dekhan'.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. a collector or farmer of revenue.

<sup>3</sup> Gosains, Bairagis, and Fakirs. Different descriptions of holy men; the first two Hindu, the last Moslem.

<sup>4</sup> Bijapur, in the Bombay Presidency, the old capital of the Adil Shahi kings.

<sup>5</sup> 'Ally', i.e. a picture of Alice, the child he had left in England.



## L E T T E R 24

[Taylor writes, happy in the midst of his work and the prospect of promotion to the rank of Captain Commandant, but with the uneasy feeling that a man might be brought in from the Company's Service to supersede him. The 'Lahore row' to which he alludes was the murder on 15th September of Sher Singh, who had since 1841 been the nominal occupant of the Punjab throne. This was followed by the murder of the Vazir, Dhian Singh, the infant Dhuleep (more properly Dalip) Singh being made the nominal Maharaja. As Taylor says, neither Sher Singh nor Dhuleep Singh was believed by anybody to be really the son of Ranjit Singh. The trouble in the Gwalior State was also due to a minority, with two men fighting for the Regency, and an unruly army: a combination which made intervention ultimately inevitable.]

*Shorapoor 23rd October '43*

Thank you heartily for your kind congratulations on my permanency, and though I am a despot will, I assure you, do as little mischief and oppression as I can help. Even my despotism is uphill work at present; all the rascally Brahmins in the place, finding that my paths would not exactly suit them, and that they would lose much influence, have foolishly set Pid to make evasions and delay about several little matters which he ought to have disposed of at once, and however amusing it is to watch their manœuvres to avoid what they know is inevitable, it is not a little provoking to find time slip through my fingers. I have but had the power two months and perhaps I have done all that is necessary in so short a period. I continue to direct one thing after another and to warn all that the longer execution is delayed the higher mounts the score against themselves, and, as has happened before, they will do all at last when

I say flatly it *must* be done. At present I have done nothing of my own invention, only directed the execution of the Supreme Govt's. orders which are good pioneers to what I have to do. At the same time there is nothing new, only a few simple rules according to old practices to shew what I expect and what must be done. Truly these people have led lawless lives so long, that any check or supervision is necessarily distasteful, and if old Pid has the sense to see, or his advisers to direct him, into a straight path it will be well for him; if not there will be no resource left but put him aside for another who would be under my control. It was a foolish thing setting up Pid at all; a fool, a liar, and a drunkard—but it was concealed from Gresley at the time he recommended him, and as the Nizam's Govt. had transmitted sanads of appointment, and the Supreme Govt. had ratified them long before I had anything to do with the affair, I had no resource at first but to settle him quietly in his place, expecting to be withdrawn as soon as that was effected. Matters have altered, however, as you know; and in all courtesy I cannot be hasty with Pid and his crew, nor shew them up in their true colours, until my orders are utterly neglected, or in any way altered. Just now, as it has been before, evasion, and the most contemptible shuffling, is practised which, as I have said, however amusing sometimes, is often provoking enough. The Governor General continues most civil; from Fraser I yesterday received a letter which was a reply to a question I had asked—He takes the opportunity of copying the following from the G.Genl. which was private to himself 'The account Capt. Taylor gives of the proceedings of the Beudars, and of the arrange-

ments with them, is very satisfactory. He has arranged the 'very difficult affairs in which he has been engaged extremely well'—This is, as you will allow, very civil, and, as not meant for any eye, perhaps the more acceptable and it was kind in the General to send it to me. I have not yet heard of my promotion, but delays are common things in official places, and I must wait patiently. The Military Secretary at Hyderabad writes to me that it is most likely an oversight, and that duplicates of the papers have been sent. Some people are trying to frighten me that an Affghan or Scinde man will be put in—but this would be out of rule. Promotions have gone by seniority for the last 14 years or thereabouts in the service and I don't at all see why the rule should be broken in my case. It would be very hard, and very unjust. Captains have succeeded to Regiments here after 15 years service, I have had 18 which is a tolerable spell of a man's life. You will have seen the Lahore row, which I have been attempting to predict in the last mail—I never thought this Dussera would pass quietly but this happened a month before, and we have to see what the effect of 'the Dussera' will be, I suspect more fighting which will serve Lord E.'s purpose exactly, split up the Sikh army into factions which will never reunite, and when we advance which I look on sooner or later to be inevitable, they must be beaten in detail—whether Lord E. suspected anything of this kind or not I know not; probably he did, and therefore ordered the Army of Exercise which could be turned into an army of advance at any time—Gwalior is still in hot water, and a vacancy having occurred at Nagpoor Lord E. has removed Col. Speirs there, and made over Gwalior to

Sleeman.<sup>1</sup> No one will go to Gwalior till matters are on a safe footing and I suppose there will be as short and sweet communication or bitter as the case may be, until the folks come to their senses. The Punjab and Gwalior would be a smash indeed—the sooner the better say I—we have respected Native States, and continue to do so as long as they are not nuisances—when they become so—by all means clap an extinguisher on them. The events in the North West will be in the highest degree interesting for some time—I look for nothing but a general scramble; some rascal will burn a village of the Company's somewhere and then we go at it hammer and tongs. Fellows are all agog in Bengal for war and Lord E. may yet have it to say that he made the Indus the boundary of India and, faith, it is a tempting thing to do if one could only find a pretext; you will say I am not politically honest, but you all uphold the Scinde matter: was that honest?—We can be honester than that in the Punjab, for we have virtually no treaties there—that with Ranjeet was not renewed and Dhuleep Sing is no more a son of old Ranjit's than Shere Singh was—Now I will wait till morning to see if a letter comes.

I sent you a plan of my house last month, which would shew you in a degree what I am about. I will tell you of my mode of life by and by when I get a mode at all. At present I live in my tent which makes a room lined with chintz—13 by 21 and is large enough for a good sitting room; you would not like it after two or three days, but custom is second nature and it is very cool. The weather in fact is delightful and will continue so for a long time i.e. till March. I have a separate sleeping tent. I

wish the T. would take up the subjects I have alluded to, boons to the army, they are very needful and ought to be granted. I have seen scraps of the Scinde papers in ours—they are being reprinted in those of Calcutta but not enough to come to a conclusion—Outram<sup>2</sup> does write badly and were it not for his practical good sense would never have got on as he has. You will find him reserved, but if he opens out he is very earnest. If you could get him to a quiet dinner you would like him. India has been dull this month excepting the Punjab, and subjects for correspondence are scarce, but I continue and where there's anything striking I will not miss it. I don't know what Lord E. will do in the Punjab, but it is a very interesting period for us.

<sup>1</sup> Sleeman, William (1788-1856), the well-known suppressor of the activities of the Thugs. He was Resident at Gwalior from 1843 to 1849.

<sup>2</sup> It was generally agreed that Outram, left to his own resources, was a poor writer. But in his controversy with the Napiers he was assisted by other and abler pens.

## LETTER 25

[Taylor refers at some length to the vexed question of the degree of interference permissible in the internal administration of Indian States. The Government of India was rightly anxious that the Rulers should have as free a hand as possible in that administration and Lord William Bentinck had especially directed a policy of non-interference. But it was very difficult for the political officers to remain indifferent where, as in the case of Hyderabad at this time, gross mismanagement led to oppression and ultimately to difficulties with the Supreme Power. One would have expected Taylor, with the knowledge he here shows of the Resident's difficulties, to be more sympathetic than he shows himself towards Fraser's efforts to keep the Nizam's Government moderately efficient.

The care taken in the education of Indian rulers in their youth

and the wider field of selection and training for their officers have entirely changed for the better the standard of efficiency in State administration since Taylor's day, while the old advantages of personal rule and dynastic loyalties have been maintained.]

*Camp near Shorapoor 22nd November 1843*

I am wearied with writing all day, and as this must go off early in the morning I can only send you a shabby note I fear. I shall not get the mail for a day or two yet, and it is provoking to think that I may have something to answer that I cannot do till next month. I can't however help the mails, you know. News I have very little, that is regarding myself. Two days after I sent off my last letter to you I received the General Order promoting me *vice* Doveton from the 7th July. I am therefore Commandant at your service henceforth. This is good for me for, as I have told you, I am sure of my Regt. if non-interference should be the policy here; that, however, it cannot be. Whether I am destined to work out my own plans, or another's, remains to be seen. The Government cannot withdraw. I have got them to go too far, and as I most conscientiously believe, the result will be good to all parties. I would fain see my own system universally carried out in India. The fact is we cannot and ought not to be passive spectators of evils which eventually recoil on our own heads. Look at the mess the Nizam's Govt. is in; if our interference and management had been increased instead of lessened by Lord Wm. Bentinck, who will say that the present financial difficulties would have ensued?—His was a selfish policy. Lord E. will uphold the honest native princes and he is right to do so, but he can't do this by means of themselves. They have no

integrity, no honour and their ministers less. We are disagreeable because honest, but should this be allowed as an excuse? I think not. General Fraser is in a mess, he can't carry his measures and the Nizam won't confirm the acting ministers because he fancies they will coalesce with the General and be too much for him. He cannot act himself nor does he like others to act. Are his people and his noble country to suffer for this? I hope not and so I write. I wish you could write some leaders for Lord Ellenborough in the *Times* which he does read. Look over my last two or three letters which have been full, *usque ad nauseam* perhaps, of Native States, but in truth I am much interested in the subject and there never was a better period than the present for settling the question of interference or non-interference for ever and a day. Why we should be so mighty punctilious I know not. We have good reason to control Gwalior and Holkar's State. We may have reason to help the Punjab; I would fain see all ours and cannot for the life of me divine why we should countenance adopted children and their universally rascally ministers. I see enough at Shorapoor on a small scale to warn a dozen politicals, and the same mess is cooked every where that a minor, and a Regent Minister, exists. I have had various diplomatic fights with Pid and his crew this month, and have not been outwitted which is saying much. I hope matters will go on better but I can't keep busy fingers from picking and stealing without very hard raps on the knuckles, and of these the said fingers will get tired in time I hope. I wrote a long private service letter to Fraser about matters three weeks ago. As he has not answered it I conclude he has sent it on to

the G.G. I have, however, done much since then, and will go the whole animal when I hear from him that I am to do so. The people expect it and are content with me. All are getting over shyness, and Pid's schemes are growing weaker. Once I have a revenue settlement of my own Pid knows he dare not interfere and I will take very good care he doesn't. You will see that Lahore is quiet, but it is not in Indian human nature that it should long remain so. Hera Singh<sup>1</sup> will be kicked out as Espartero has been, and I conclude we shall walk in. When this may be is doubtful but I wish with all my heart it was soon. Troops are gathering and whenever danger threatens they will move promptly and overwhelmingly, perhaps headed by the G.G. I suspect he longs to smell powder. I have moved out to write a few letters and to meet my wife whom I hope to join tomorrow. We are only 14 miles asunder, and I go to meet her tomorrow morning. I shall then return to Shorapoor and after as short a stay as possible move out to wrangle with villagers on the price of lands and the amount of Govt. revenue. The weather is delightful, and I would you could look at us for a week; more would not suit you.

The *Bombay Times*, with which I was at feud a long time, paid me a compliment the other day, particularly noting all the letters of the Deccan correspondent to the *Times* as replete with information etc etc. He, the Ed. B.T., is not easy, however, at people writing monthly letters as he would like to have the monopoly of the article.

23rd

My wife has joined me today, looking quite well, but



thinner; she has been better since she left Hyderabad. Amy<sup>2</sup> is quite well, and we are all happy again. No mail yet, I must send off this. We shall go into Shorapoor tomorrow for a few days.

<sup>1</sup> Hira Singh, the son of the Vazir Dhian Singh, had succeeded in putting his father's murderers to death, but was himself assassinated in the following year. The mention of Espartero is a reference to the somewhat similar state of affairs in Spain at this period.

<sup>2</sup> Amy: this is the first reference in these letters to Taylor's second daughter.

## LETTER 26

[While Taylor imagined that the Governor-General might be at Agra, at the date of this letter he had already moved towards Gwalior, determined to make a settlement in that troubled State. The British forces had crossed the River Chambal on 21st December, and two successful actions were to be fought on the same day, the 29th.

Taylor's remarks about Sind were far too gloomy. Although very unhealthy for the troops, it was not so bad as he represents, and there was no fear of the Baluchis or the Sindhis making trouble under Sher Mahomed or anyone else. The British administration had been accepted and indeed welcomed in Sind.]

*Camp Kukera, Shorapoor, 26th December 1843*

I have been very much concerned to hear of your illness from John Edward and Robert, who both mention it, and I conclude that you are not able to write your usual welcome letter to me on that account.

From hence I have little to say. My wife, who came to me last month in a distressing state of nervousness and weakness, is now I am thankful to say nearly as strong as ever. Constant changes, for we are marching about, most glorious weather, and gentle exercise have done more for her in a month than all the medicine she was ordered to

take at Hyderabad; indeed I have stopped the medicines altogether, and with good effect. My child is well and rosy, enjoying life most heartily. My affair is prospering to all appearances and please God I will shew good results in time. But neglect and oppression have done their worst in this country and whole villages, which once yielded handsome revenues, are little better than heaps of rubbish, and piles of mouldering walls. Still however, there is life and the body is not without latent vigour. I have just made a five years settlement of a small district in which the villages offered voluntarily to double the revenue in five years, and bring all the waste lands into cultivation. I have been content with their offer. I might have screwed them up more, perhaps, but that would have put them out of heart, and if I can win confidence I have no fear of the result. After 50 years of misgovernment, one cannot expect that to come at once, indeed the country is so wanting in common honesty and principle, that, having no confidence in itself, it cannot be wondered at that it should mistrust for the present everything and everybody. Five years however will work a change I think, and as the land in the adjoining Company's territory is let high I think I shall get back my own people who have emigrated in numbers, and others besides. 50 families of weavers *alone* have given notice to quit there, and a deputation from them was received with music and rejoicing at the last village I encamped at, from where they had gone 10 years ago; their houses are still standing but are roofless. My little Raja is getting on with English fairly and when he is more advanced I will get a good Brahmin teacher for him, and if I can induce a civilised

Brahmin to venture among the Beudars, he may help me to infuse civilization, or right ideas any way, among them.

I am conscious of having written a very dull letter to the T. but we are dull in India this month. The Governor General is moving up the river, and may now be near Agra. Whilst he is there we shall know nothing about Gwalior or the Punjab matters. I hope he won't blunder in on a subsidiary force for Gwalior without our authority in civil matters also. With the Nizam's country before my eyes, and the results of our partial interference, I cannot imagine that a similar line of policy will be followed elsewhere. At the time it was adopted, 1801, it suited our necessities. But what are the necessities now? Scinde is becoming a charnel house. More than half the troops are in hospital, 1/3 of those that are out are unfit to bear arms! If there is any disturbance fresh men must be sent and the Belooches may take heart again under Shere Mahomed.<sup>1</sup> We shall see in no long time. Next month the news may be full of interest and I am always on the watch though out of the way enough. Many many thanks for your flies which Mary brought down with her. I should be at the Krishna in a day or two and will have a trial of them.

<sup>1</sup> Sher Mahomed, of the Mirpur branch of the Talpur Amirs of Sind, who had fought against Sir Charles Napier's army at the battle of Hyderabad.

## L E T T E R 27

[The January letter of Taylor's has not been preserved. He must certainly have mentioned the actions at Maharajpur and Panniar. The policy of Lord Ellenborough regarding the Gwalior State was made the ground for his recall by the Court of Directors of the East India Company. Yet Taylor's opinion that it was justified

has been borne out by the fortunate history of the Gwalior State. It is probable that the Directors were alarmed, as they well might be, by Lord Ellenborough's injudicious speeches on army matters. Taylor's anticipation that the divided Regency at Gwalior would not work was falsified.]

*Camp Nelingi on the Bheema. Feby. 24th 1844*

We have been travelling about since I last wrote to you, and my duties have been hard. I have a continual battle to fight with dishonest people who have been cheating the Government for years and, because there is no plunder or oppression as formerly, they suppose they may do so now with impunity. To prevent this and establish a fair course for the future is my present aim, and though I cannot come at the truth for a year or two, yet I am gaining information which will lead to it. At present, as you may conceive, the work is anything but agreeable. It is sad to see fine villages which formerly yielded 5 and 6000 Rupees each now reduced to one or one and a half thousand, the greater part of them being masses of ruins. Whether people may come back to their old residences I know not, but they will not do so until they see that my stay here is certain. And, from what reason I cannot divine, the people at Shorapoor constantly raise a report that I am to go, which produces distrust. Now that I am on the Bheema the report is that I am preparing to cross it into the Nizam's country, and when I was at the Krishnah, the report is the same. I am afraid all this nonsense originates in Pid Naik, who would rather the whole territory should be ruined than that he should be made to account for money which he has a wonderful disposition to convert to his own uses. It is the case with all native régimes, the Regent if not overlooked accumulates all he

can for himself. Look at Heera Sing,<sup>1</sup> at Gwalior the Khasgeewalla, the Regencies at Jeypoor etc etc. Pid Naik has a large family; one son 12 years old, and a fine boy; if he could have got the succession for him it is not unlikely he would have tried. The other little fellow would have been put out of the way quietly, and we should have heard nothing of the matter till it was too late. Such things have been, at Jeypoor for instance where there is little doubt one young raja was put to death to secure a longer Regency, and here among these wild Beudars there is every probability that there would have been a similar result. I have been obliged to report rather severely on some questionable acts of Pid Naik, and whether the G.G. may take any notice of them or not I am as yet uncertain. I hope a strong letter of advice may be sent, which will strengthen me greatly, and do a great deal of good. Lord Ellenborough has had his hands too full of late however to pay much attention to my little go, but as nothing escapes him I shall no doubt hear in the end.

I shall be curious to see what view the T. takes of this Gwalior affair. Here the local press is divided, some supporting it, and some declaring it unjustifiable for any interference to be made with a State to which we had guaranteed entire independence. I confess I support Lord E. and think he was justified and that he would have been justified also in dealing out some severe punishments. We have no convents in India, or the little fiery vixen of a Ranee at Gwalior, she is 13 or 14, who has adopted a son of 9, might have been well consigned to one to cool her temper for a few years. As it is she remains, and will

bother the Council yet. She will of course set up a fancy man as she cannot marry and there will be some more trouble with him. The natives say the Khasgeewalla was ower sib with her, hence the whole row. I suspect Lord E. has not officers to spare to manage the whole country for the minor, hence the slurring over of that matter. But take my word for it the divided Regency won't do, and there will be necessity for change before long. Either we ought not to interfere at all in these matters, or if we do we ought to contrive to sow the seed of good. Nagpoor which had good Superintendents, and where the Raja was taught by Jenkins, is still one of the best managed states in India, comfortable in circumstances and the people happy. There, however, Jenkins was master; at Hyderabad there was a half and half management which protected the people while it lasted, and exposed them to misery when it was abandoned. What will be done at Gwalior we have yet to see. I am at all events glad that the old French Campoos<sup>2</sup> have been rooted out, and a force in our own interests established; those Campoos were very insolent and unmanageable, and being independent of the State by means of large Jagheers to their leaders, did as they pleased, now supporting one fellow, now another, to the annoyance of all.

What Fraser is about at Hyderabad I know not, but not doing much I suspect, that is if to do anything is desired. The Nizam looks after matters himself somewhat, and the people tell me has made reductions to the amount of 50 lacs a year. This is something, but his country is wretchedly governed, and the poor oppressed, and so it will go on to the end of the chapter.

There is a report that young Dhuleep Sing has been murdered in some row, but I wait for the post to write particulars to the T. If by Heera Singh, will the G.G. interfere? Not this year perhaps; he has had enough of war. In fact I dare say in any case he will wait for aggression on the part of the Sikhs. We are in strong force on the Sutlege, so are they and anything may produce a collision. Fortunately, perhaps, the river is wide and deep, and crossing no easy matter to either party. The Sikhs have made preparations for war, and there has been no end of the manufacture of powder, cannon balls and muskets. You in England will take up Lord E.'s after dinner speeches at Gwalior, and I would have done it here only you say I am to be official, which I am I hope *now*. He deserves a little free advice and I hope the T. will give it. I hope he takes it in. He has no business to inflame his army nor to talk nonsense even after his claret. That he wd. like to be another Napoleon or Alexander I doubt not, but such people are but large public nuisances after all, and are not to be tolerated in these days. Gresley goes home by this mail and I have sent him a note to you. He is very absent, but he is a good writer and sound practical thinker, and I think will suit you. He is almost the only Indian friend I have left, so pray be kind to him if you have an opportunity for my sake. Outram is at Bombay but what he is going to do I know not.

<sup>1</sup> Hira Singh. See note on Letter 25. The 'Khusgeewalla' at Gwalior was the Dada Khasgiwala, or administrator of the Maharani's personal estates.

<sup>2</sup> Campoo. Corruption of English 'Camp' or Portuguese 'Campo'. Applied particularly to the brigades under European leadership in the Gwalior and Indore States.

## LETTER 28

[Taylor had evidently continued to write of Lord Ellenborough's proceedings in a manner too strong for *The Times*. His remarks about the policy to be adopted towards the Indian States show how fluid even so well-informed a man could be in his opinions. His belief that the States would be absorbed has been falsified, largely because of the improvements which have been effected in their administration.]

*Shorapoor the 25. Apl. 1844*

I have little to say this month, and very little time indeed to write to you at all. I had set aside today for several letters when a vile Panchayet<sup>1</sup> regarding some Brahminical precedence had to be settled; and this took me the whole forenoon, a plaguey job. Priests are perhaps of more tenacity regarding rank than any other classes of persons, and these Brahmins are fighting as to whether one sect should beat little drums and wave fans before a holy man who has come here to beg, or not. A Plague on them all say I, since you and several other correspondents must be next to neglected. Here we have little news—Lord E. is quiet at Calcutta, and there appears no great amount of new public business done in the recess. Perhaps something is being concocted for a march in the winter, but we shall know nothing of it till note of preparation is sounded in the magazines of Agra etc.

The Punjab is quiet, and no one seems to know what Akbar Khan<sup>2</sup> is going to do with the army he has got, I don't think he will touch Peshawar. Heera Singh has recalled the last drunken Governor and has sent a sharp fellow who has his eyes about him and who has been able to control his followers for a month which is some praise



as matters are now in the Punjab. You will see that Heera Singh has assisted to put his uncle Suchetsing<sup>3</sup> to death, and that there is a rebellion which has proved formidable, but we have no concern with all this, I suppose, until we come in contact, when Sir R. Peel's Indian doctrine will prevail. I don't deny that it is my own, but we ought to be decent in these matters, not barefaced as in Sind. We need not hurry; if you and I live 30 years more it is most likely we shall see every native state absorbed, but our young men want to do all in a hurry and that is false policy. I begin to fall into Lord William Bentinck's line of non-interference. If the absorption of these States is our eventual object, and I suppose now that it is in spite of the G.G.s coquetry with Gwalior, we need only let them alone and they go to the dogs directly. Let us withdraw wholly from the Nizam's dominion and he is done, but we hold him up and will continue to do so for many a day yet in spite of his worthless management. Yet he has got a native manager who has done good as yet. I have given a sketch of the affairs to the T.

By the way what new abuse have I been writing of my Lord E. ? I have racked my brains in vain to remember and I keep no copies of my letters. I hope you will remark that I have been very guarded this month. I cannot always praise, I wish I could, for such odd things are done that one's mind rebels against them. I see the T. does not spare Lord E. but he is a deep toned mastiff and I but a yelping cur. Well, I will be very discreet and Mr. Delane has always power to cut out what he pleases. You said something about payment for which I am very thankful, Praed's will always receive any sums for me. We have

been in here since the latter end of March when it had become frightfully hot and is awfully so still, but we have shelter and are thankful even for an unfinished house. But I have been very anxious about my poor wife who is reduced in strength, has weakening attacks of fever, and will not rally. They have lately sent us a new Medical attendant who seems clever, and he is willing to do his best. We had only an Hospital Asst. before. Now we have a Sub-Asst. Surgeon, an Irishman the son of a Rector in Meath, ruined by non-payment of tythes. This lad was being educated as a surgeon in Dublin, has a college degree, passed his courses with credit, but his father could no longer support him, so he enlisted and having bought his discharge is now in the Nizam's Army. His name is Ardagh. I am easier in mind since he has been with us, but you know what anxiety is, and can estimate mine, lonely, and away from aid as I am. We cannot move till the rains fall, if we are obliged to move for better advice or change of air, and till then I shall hope that care and constant attention may do much.

<sup>1</sup> Panchayet. A committee, originally of five persons: and thus the inquiry for which the committee is appointed.

<sup>2</sup> Akbar Khan. Son of the Amir of Afghanistan. The man who had held the British prisoners during the war.

<sup>3</sup> Suchet Singh had attempted at the end of March 1844 to seize the power in the Punjab.

## LETTER 29

[In this and the next letter Taylor describes his work in its difficult conditions of climate and loneliness. He was clearly in great anxiety about his wife's health. In his mention of police arrangements in India he was alluding to a subject which always interested him greatly. The measure of having armed police battalions was

being tried at the time in several parts of India. Such police proved invaluable not merely as a check on lawlessness, but, as Taylor foresaw, as a relief for the regular troops from duties which absorbed many men, and seriously impaired their efficiency.]

*Shorapoor 14th May 1844*

I have passed an anxious time since I last wrote to you, first as regards my poor wife, who was exceedingly ill for some days, constant fever, cough and debility upon her. Thank God, however, that she is better, the fever is leaving her gradually, the cough is nearly gone and she is gaining strength, I do not say fast, for the hot weather always keeps invalids back, but she is mending. When we have had some rain, and the rain cannot be long absent from us now, we shall all feel refreshed and revived and shall breathe again; just now the heat is terrible and well may it be so when we have a blazing sun, and have had no rain since last October. I shall look very anxiously to the effect of cool weather upon her, for if this weakness lasts I shall have no recourse but to send her to England, a very painful necessity to put up with in this solitude.

I have also been anxious about affairs here, for I found that Pid was trying to evade all orders both my own and the Govt's, in fact trying to set up for himself. I could not discover a reason for this till the other day I heard here, and it was simultaneously heard at Hyderabad, that the Nizam's Durbar had interested themselves for Pid, that is, had signified that they would do so for a consideration. 1 lakh to the Nizam, 30,000 Rs. to his Peshkar<sup>1</sup> Rambaksh, 20,000 to Raja Bal Mokund one of the assistants. This intrigue has been going on for a long time by the assistance of Luchmunjee Gosayn formerly

mentioned, who, if the thing could be effected, would raise the money at Hyderabad for Pid on his own security and come here and collect it, that is, get all the country into his hands and lord it over Pid and everybody else, as his father did, and as he was preparing to do when I checked him. Now Pid has not the smallest intention or ability of paying a farthing, but my control is distasteful to him and to all the people through whose hands money passes, because I prevent to the best of my ability anyone from stealing any. Pid and his people supposed that if they paid the Government dues, they might put the residue into their own pockets, which I would not allow them to do. Hence intrigue. As long as this intrigue was aimed at myself I was very indifferent to it but now that it has assumed a higher shape, and the interests of this State and the order of Govt. are set at nought, it is very necessary to put it down. We are concerting measures to do so, and how the matter will end I don't know, but I hope it will soon be put down for it is very inconvenient to me in every way. Just at this juncture too, the Nizam's Govt. is in a state of disgust at a demand which the Govt. of India has made upon it for all monies which have been paid by the Shorapoor State since the Gresley settlement. When I came here, I soon found out by reference to old correspondence that this State had been absolutely plundered by the Nizam's, which still demanded an arrear of 5 lakhs. I was told by Fraser that this was a just balance (which was not the case), and was required to collect it and I have sent 1 lakh and 66,000 Rupees, £16,600. I wrote that so far from the state owing anything the Nizam's owed it 11 lakhs, and if this could not be recovered for it, the least

that could be done was to wipe off the debt. However, he would not even attempt a reference to the Nizam's Govt. about it. Lord E. was silent, and I began to think people had no eyes or understanding, for the matter was as plain as the sun. It seems however that my correspondence went home, whether backed by the G.G. or not I don't know, and the Directors have ordered that not only is the remainder of the debt to be wiped off, but all monies paid to be returned. The Resident has made an official communication to this effect to the Nizam and it has given the Nizam a pain in his belly. He is very crusty, because he not only thought himself sure of the 5 lakhs sooner or later but Pid's foolish Nuzzerana of 175,000. And all the Durbar are wroth too; in short there is a very pretty kettle of fish. I could not notice this to the T., if indeed it was worth it, but, who knows, anything and everything is an excuse to the Lord Sahib nowadays and if the Nizam *won't* pay he may be *made* to pay. Chundoo Lall or any other Minister would have settled the affair sharp, but all matters go to the Nizam now, who with his blundering Tartar<sup>2</sup> skull and arrogance may say or do something very foolish. In fact we are all in an interesting position. Pid, the fool, to get a chance of getting money, would now, if he has not done it already, sign an agreement to pay 5 lakhs, and 175,000 Rs. of Nuzzerana, thus loading the State with debt. I hope he may do it or may have done it, and that some one will sell him at Hyderabad. If we could but get hold of his letters, we should do. I suppose the G.G. would turn him out of his situation which bothers and cramps me, and is a source of vexation to everyone concerned with it. I shall know

more next month I daresay. Lord E. is very quiet, but he is preparing for anything there may be to do. These local heavy police battalions are good things and I wish they were everywhere, which I suppose they will be in time. They appear to have answered very well in Bundelkhund as police, which was doubted, and no one had ever any doubt about their necessity for reliefs to the regulars in detachment duties jail guards etc etc. Here too at four stations are 4500 regular troops, filling up voids which may be left by troops of the line. Of an army we can assemble in India 4500 men is a large portion. Shall we have the Punjab or not? Sometimes I think yes, sometimes no; you seem to have argued yourselves into a state of acquiescence and so I suppose we shall sooner or later. I long to hear what you say regarding Gwalior and we shall hear in a few days, not, however, before this is far on its way to Bombay. Lord E. ought to have gone the whole animal to have done good, that is have taken the State under his management till the boy was of age. These half and half measures do no good. Look at me here.

<sup>1</sup> *Peshkar*, agent or minister.

<sup>2</sup> The founder of the Nizam's dynasty, Chin Kilij Khan, was, like the Mogul Emperors, of Central Asian origin.

## LETTER 30

*Shorapoor 12th June 1844*

I don't know how to agree to your proposition that a man's intellects are strengthened by solitude; perhaps they might be by perfect solitude but that I question. I question whether mine will be by a residence at Shorapoor. It is a struggling wearing perplexing life, 'at least

it has been and will be till matters are put on a better footing than they are at present. This disinclines me for work other than what falls to my lot with the people, and after a weary day of unsatisfactory remonstrance and struggling with dishonest Pid Naik and all his crew, one is little inclined either to read or write, or even think. When, too, my poor wife's state continues very weak, and sometimes ill, I have enough to absorb what thought I can manage to rake up. Apathy would be even pleasant, I believe sometimes, but I am not apathetic, and therefore I know that I suffer more than I choose to tell anyone. Thank God, however, my wife is better, though the improvement is slight. I believe I should feel less anxious had I some one to share the anxiety with me, but I have none. Natives are not generally companionable, and no one here has any pretension to be such. I hope, however, I shall give you better accounts next month. Mary has no fever now but she is very weak and reduced, and is still troubled with the spleen and the cough. I hope as I have always done, that the rains will set her up, and a fortnight ago there were a few showers which made us feel cool for a day or two and revived her wonderfully. We ought soon to have more; indeed it is curious that it should hold off so long, the 4th June is our monsoon day and we always grudge every one which passes after that without a shower.

Pid's intrigue at Hyderabad got to a head and burst, or rather it subsided into insignificance. Malcolm and the Resident heard of it and began asking about it, the underlings at court grew fearful, disowned the persons whom they had been encouraging, and so the matter stopped.

Yet Pid is foolish enough to listen to the advice of his creatures and to persist in disobeying the Govt. orders. They tell him that all will come right, that he must not be discouraged by a slap in the face, etc. He believes them. He was royally, or rather *hogly*, drunk for three days, and when he recovered he took himself off to be present at the wedding of a neighbouring Raja. The Govt., or rather the Resident, has taken the matter up, and has applied to me to report whether I could manage alone, whether there would be any opposition, whether Pid Naik could in any way be retained or whether if he were removed any one else could be appointed. I have said 'There is no one here whom I could trust, except perhaps the Ranee, she is better than Pid. I will work alone if you choose and will support me, you can perhaps keep Pid in by ordering him to obey your orders but you should require his resignation if he will not, and my opinion is that he will resign rather than obey. If he resigns this will leave your hands free, and you can then do as you please, and according to former precedents, Nagpoor, Sattara, Akulkote.<sup>1</sup> I believe it to be impossible for any English officer to act with a Dewan who is not placed under him, and, if the present system is to be continued, to be responsible for the proceeds or application of the Revenue over which at present I have no control. The control which you ordered is set at nought by *your Dewan*; you had better then require an account of it at his hands.'

This is the substance or rather meaning of a late dispatch to which I have received no reply. I suspect this, with all the late correspondence about Pid and with Pid,



will go up to the Govr. Genl. and I have no doubt that he will see his utter inefficiency and turn him out. He was bad enough as an idle drunken beast, but having become an arrogant drunken beast he is as you may well suppose insufferable. I shall look out for the reply very anxiously, and I hope as they have allowed the matter to go on so long that it will be decisive. I dare say I shall be able to tell you next month.

I see you all lean to the Punjab, i.e., to taking it. The nearer it comes the more responsible and arduous it appears, and the consequences more to be looked into, yet after all it is no more than Tippoo's<sup>2</sup> affair, not so much may be, and we are stronger now than then. The army needs to be a good one, and it will be that; there will be two or three general battles, clumsy affairs on the part of the Sikhs who won't manœuvre their troops, sharp ones on our side, a few sieges, and a variety of desultory affairs. I believe the whole will end fairly in spite of the Sikh army and guns, which are just the thing to put us on our mettle, but we had as well look to the consequences, to the increase in the army, the loss of revenue in every new country, and the difficulty of management for *many years*, to troubles with Affghans, and all the people along the Indus, Golabsing,<sup>3</sup> Sawun Mull<sup>4</sup> and a host of others; I am however anticipating.

I have a vision also sometimes of a house, and the bairns and wife and you and others. God knows, it is a long way off, and there may be much misery between.

<sup>1</sup> In Nagpur and Satara nominees of the Indian Government had been placed on the throne in 1818 and 1837. Akalkot, a small State of the Bombay Deccan, had been placed under guardianship during the minority of the Chief.

\* Tippoo's affair: the campaigns against Tipu Sultan of Mysore in 1790 and 1799.

† Golab Singh, afterwards Maharaja of Kashmir, one of the three Dogra Rajput brothers, the other two being Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh.

‡ Sawan Mal, the semi-independent governor of Multan in the southern Punjab. He was assassinated in September 1844.

## LETTER 31

[This letter conveys the sad intelligence of the death of Mrs. Meadows Taylor. There can be no doubt of the deep affection existing between her and her husband, nor of the extent of the bereavement to him. The words still to be read on her tomb at Lingsugur may perhaps be quoted. 'Those who loved her on earth, and they were many, valued her tender devotedness and with them that deep affection dwells which death cannot impair.']

*Lingsoogoor 22nd Sept. 1844*

It has pleased Almighty God to take from me my poor wife, and to release her from the long suffering and pain which she has borne without a sigh or a murmur. On the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup>, soon after five in the afternoon her noble faithful true heart ceased to beat, and without a sigh or motion her spirit left her broken body to be at peace for ever. Yet it was very sudden; she had been weak during the day, yet not so as to alarm me till about three oclock when I fancied her growing feebler. Her medical attendant came soon after and said there was no hope, and she gradually sank. God be thanked she suffered nothing, we scarcely knew that she ceased to breathe so gently did her spirit leave her.

We laid her in her last resting place last evening, and all the native officers and men of my old corps<sup>1</sup> accompanied us, old veterans many of them; all wept like children for they had known her for years and loved her.



MRS. MEADOWS TAYLOR  
*(From a painting attributed to her husband)*

She was endeared to them by many kindnesses. To the last her mind was active and even full of hope but her terrible disorder, consumption, for so it has proved, indeed, though we knew not of it, there has been no doubt for months, fills the mind with delusive hope. She clung to the hope of going to England to the last, but when she found herself failing fast two short hours before the end, resigned at once for a higher hope which never left her. She was sensible to the last, but could not speak yet she smiled and showed that she was happy and had no pain, and this comforted me.

To you who have undergone this ordeal, this breaking of the most precious and holiest of mortal ties, I can say nothing. I would not even arouse the memory of the past could I help it, but I must write to you, though I can write to no one else but my father. The memories of thirteen years of happy union of hearts and affections, of no interruption to this but on the contrary of its being drawn closer by sickness, by loss of children, by many anxieties and cares, rise up before me, and the dark reality that she is gone from me, who shared all and to whom solitude or society were indifferent if we were together, presses on my heart very heavily. Before me I see years of leaden solitude through which with God's help I must work my way till I can earn enough to throw it off and come to you, but it is a dreary prospect.

If my letters have been anxious you will have guessed the reason. I dared not give up hope while any remained, and I have clung to it with a tenacity which may have been wrong, but which I could not abandon. She was full of hope herself, and I shared this with her till my last

return here from Shorapoor when I saw a fearful change. I had been absent from here for 18 days, a long time but I was very ill at Shorapoor from an attack of cold and I could not leave my bed.

I shall send this to Sara<sup>2</sup> at Marseilles and beg her to forward it to you ; she may know your direction. I cannot write to the T. but have sent a note to Delane to tell him why. I will go on next month. Just now, the machinery of mind and body has received a jar which only time and much self-communion can set right.

<sup>1</sup> The 6th Infantry, then stationed at Lingsugur.

<sup>2</sup> Sara, of the family of his cousins at Marseilles.

## LETTER 32

[The threatened outbreak at Shorapur afforded Taylor some relief from his lonely grief. He makes his first mention of the new Governor-General, Sir Henry Hardinge. Probably he had referred to Lord Ellenborough's recall, which must have interested him greatly, in letters written in July and August which have not been preserved. Hardinge, brother-in-law of the Governor-General he replaced, reached Calcutta on 23 July 1844, being the first holder of his office to come to India by the overland route.]

*Shorapoor, 23rd October 1844*

As you wrote that you would be in London before this can reach England I will not miss a mail. I wrote last month hurriedly and incoherently to you and I sent my letter to the care of Sara at Marseilles who, I hope, would know where you were and could forward it to you. I trust therefore that you will have received it.

It would tell you that my poor Mary has been taken from me and if you had not received it, you will have heard this from other quarters. I think I have written

little to anyone except my father and yourself. The pain, the bitter anguish of bereavement you have felt as well as myself, you when years of happiness seemed spread out before you, with nothing to alloy them but the ordinary events of life, I after many years of the truest companionship with her, who in sickness and trials of many kinds, in the loss of our children, in many anxieties and much happiness never failed in devotion and in the truest love that woman can feel, or man can return. God's holy will be done; it is not for us to attempt to fathom his purposes or attempt to reconcile them to our narrow limited ideas. But the hope that never dies within us will cheer us on till the end, and an event like this speaks to our hearts that, as the better part of our affections now lies beyond the earth, so are the aspirations to follow them more true, more fervent. So I feel and so am comforted even in this solitude which would be hard to bear indeed, were not the hope within me vivid and earnest. A month today has passed since I wrote, a month of heavy heartedness and with that utter want of companionship wherein I might find vent for oppressive feeling, which has laid an additional burthen upon me. It is but the beginning however of years, and my course must be run without flinching or deviation, else I cannot return to you all where my earthly affections only rest now. I had knit my heart to bear parting with my poor Mary for some years for I clung to the hope that I might send her to you and hear of her safety, and perhaps this feeling also, this determination to bear her absence from me, has with God's help enabled me to bear this separation of death more tranquilly. It is like a part of the same thought, but the bitterness of the

sequel, as you know, can be felt and endured though not told save to God and her spirit. I will not think she is far from me now.

I left Lingsoogoor leaving Amy with my kind friends there who are most kind to me, and returned here in great anxiety in consequence of some horrible reports regarding the existence of a conspiracy to destroy the young Raja at the Dussera<sup>1</sup> when he should go out in procession. I reported the existence of the rumour to Fraser, and suggested a Regt<sup>2</sup> being sent to keep down tumult, and was glad when he took my view of the subject and sent it me.<sup>3</sup> It is now here and is encamped below me. The Dussera processions passed off peaceably, and, with 100 bayonets, I accompanied the poor little fellow through the night. I had taken other precautions also, and the troops were under arms all night in their camp, ready for any work that might chance to happen. The attitude assumed by me, however, and the feeling that I had intimation of the plot prevented it, no one lifted a finger, and though we were among 8000 armed and resolute men all night, on elephants, no harm came to us. I never left the lad's side, and I think I saved him. I have got depositions of persons who were aware of the plot; it had been *no doubt* arranged by a man named Krishnia,<sup>3</sup> who has led Pid Naik into much evil and been his prime counsellor. The lad and I were to have been attacked during the procession and dealt with. Pid Naik had a vakeel all ready at Hyderabad to offer any amount of Nuzzurana for the succession, and, as a neighbouring Raja<sup>4</sup> was put to death the other day by conspirators of whom the Nizam's Govt. have taken no notice, so these supposed their scheme

would have succeeded equally well, but I have a faithful party here and knew of the design, providentially in time to shew that I was prepared, and was not to be meddled with with impunity. I have arrested Krishnia and put him in irons; I have got too the evidence of one of his most confidentially employed agents, which is clear, decisive and on oath and I can get more. I have got evidence of Pid Naik's share by silent acquiescence in this matter, and I have reported all to Fraser, for whose instructions I look earnestly; nearly a year ago I wrote that if Pid's folly was not checked it would end in crime, and he has been on the verge, the very verge, of it. I don't know what will be done, but you will know next month. This plot and the anxiety consequent on it has roused me, and I am well. My mind, which felt utterly prostrated for a while, has asserted its own rights, but, the excitement over, the old dull routine will begin again, though, if this conduct of Pid Naik's is noticed as it ought to be, I might be freed by his dismissal from the miserable connection I have borne with him. Strange there is no reply yet from Sir H. Hardinge, but it must come soon now. Fraser has sent my reports on this plot to the Supreme Govt. and they might be decisive.

I have written to the *Times* again and will go on. There is little news, except reports of plots<sup>5</sup> in the S. Mahratta country which have obliged the Bombay Govt. to send 4000 men into it. A fort is holding out, and two officers have been killed before it. It will be taken when the reinforcements which have been ordered arrive but I should not be at all surprised that it was a bloody affair. I have noted it in the T. letter and you will see allusions



to the half-and-half management of minorities system, the evils of which I feel here. There is no other news, except in the Punjab. Gulabsing and Heera Singh are in the field and may have probably fought an action ere now.

<sup>1</sup> Dussera. A festival in October, on the tenth day of the Hindu month, celebrated with especial pomp in the Deccan.

<sup>2</sup> This was the 2nd Infantry. The Resident also sent 200 cavalry.

<sup>3</sup> More correctly, Krishnaya.

<sup>4</sup> This was the Raja of the State of Gadwal, now the chief feudatory State in the Nizam's dominions.

<sup>5</sup> The trouble in Kolhapur and in a neighbouring State in the Bombay Presidency was only suppressed with great delay, largely due to the incompetent management of the early military operations.

### LETTER 33

[This letter requires no comment. Taylor's opinion of Pid Naik seems to have fluctuated with some rapidity, as did his views on the Ranee, the mother of the small Chief.]

*Shorapoor 22nd Nov. 1844*

I have had a busy and in most respects a satisfactory month and you will be glad to hear that my business matters here are far smoother than they have been for a long time past. Not that Govt. has in anyway helped me, but in the removal of that wretch Krishnia all opposition intrigue and vexation has ceased, and Pid Naik has thrown himself into my hands without reserve or hesitation, and, to his wonder, not only finds that he is no worse for it but a great deal better in every sense of the word. In fact a glimpse of his liabilities frightened him. He promised me the last year's expenditure should not exceed a certain sum, and he finds he has considerably more than doubled it. He knows that were Government to ask for it he has not a farthing to pay. The orders of Government are

now completely obeyed, and I desire no more than this. I sign all orders upon the treasury, nothing is done without my permission, I countersign every order of business. In fact we are now in our proper places, and, as it has all come about of itself, I hope it will last; indeed Pid Naik has so completely identified himself with me, that he dare not retract, without exposing himself to suspicion and more troubles than he has yet been in. He is a poor weak drunken creature, and yet, with all, has many good points, I cannot help being fond of him though I have been obliged to cuff him very often and if he will only behave decently now, I will earn a name for him such as he never dreamt of. The contrast in the present quiet to the former fever is most acceptable, and I am very thankful for it, for I fretted and worried in mind about these affairs. I was little able to bear my own trouble as I ought to have done, and was really worn out in mind and much in body also. You may believe then what a relief the present peace is. Everyone finds it a relief, I believe, and if I can only keep matters as they are with an even impartial hand, I may at least be able to check that restless intriguing spirit which these people seemed delighted to indulge in, even though it was hurrying them on to difficulty. I suspect Fraser thought I had gone too far in asking for Krishnia; but I knew my man, and the good it would do, and he is in simple confinement only at Muktul waiting the Govt. pleasure. Another scoundrel who was an associate of his, a Brahmin, died very suddenly, and I suspect, dreading disclosures, took poison. He was a good riddance, and the rest of the party being nobodies have broken up, and the best of them, or the

neutral people, joined me so that they cannot retract. In particular the accountants, record keepers, and others with whose cooperation everything goes on smoothly and without it was in continual confusion. And wonderful to relate I have made and am making roads into this heretofore robbers' den the entrances to which were purposely made impassable to any but foot men or horses used to the loose slippery rocks at the gateways. In a month more I shall have good roads everywhere, 20 feet broad, and I have actually written for a phaeton of Her Gracious Majesty's pattern for the young Raja, the riding in which will give him much pleasure and be a great source of wonderment to the people. Seriously, however the opening of this heretofore sealed place will, I hope, have a moral effect upon the people, and when I get a decent school next year, and a dispensary I shall think that I may be able to make something of the place after all.

There is no news this month except that dirty little Kolapoor war, which we have just cause to be ashamed of. I am in the way of hearing a good deal about it from natives here, and one and all agree in saying that all was brought on by the Brahmin agent. Why he should have ever gone, I know not, but such is the non-interference system at present in vogue, which will lead us into perpetual little squabbles of this kind. At Gwalior they are sick of Ram Rao Phalkia, and would gladly hail the entire administration by the Resident. I have heard today that the Nizam is going to levy a contribution upon his Jagheerdars, and the amount which has been proposed to him officially by the Dufturdars (State accountants) is one crore and 48 lakhs, a good haul if he takes it in, and

which will clear him from his encumbrances and carry him on for a while. If he does not do this, he must borrow from the Company and the Company won't lend without security in land, or the general management of the country. A short time will decide all, but it is interesting to watch just now. I have no other news. We have a delightful season and I start on the first district tour, tomorrow. I shall go to Lingsoogoor at Christmas to see my child and to have some little society at that time. I am not likely to have any more during the year, but as long as I am worked hard, I do not feel lonely, or so lonely as I should, perhaps, even in more society, with other employment.

## LETTER 34

*Camp Tintinne 24th Dec. 1844*

I have just received yours of the 29th October and a few days after you wrote it you may have heard from me the last sad news of my poor wife. Most heartily do I now thank you for all your expressions of sympathy with the cares which then lay very heavy on me on many accounts, and which I see I must have expressed only too forebodingly of the future, though then, beyond the present weight of anxiety principally relating to contemplated long separation and the breaking up of our house, instead of the tranquil life we had pictured over to ourselves, I had no further dread. Weakening as it seemed to be I had no idea of her illness being mortal. I knew her strength of mind and constitution, and so long as she bore up in mind I had no fear for the body,

thinking I should be able to get her away to you all in the cold weather or that one Indian cold weather would set her up and that she would be well.

I am going to Lingsoogoor to see my child and stay a few days to relieve myself from the incessant labour of the last month. How different is this visit from last year's when she was in good health, and all apprehension on her account had left my mind.

We have nothing new in politics, the G.G. is at Calcutta from whence he does not seem to have the slightest idea of moving and Sir Hugh Gough<sup>1</sup> has lately been on the Sutlej inspecting the frontier stations, and I doubt not sighing for your new Earl's<sup>2</sup> company who, according to the Sir Hugh's acknowledgement, was to have led armies into another field, i.e. the Punjab, this year. I have not the least doubt we should have had half a dozen general actions by this time had the pugnacious Lord remained, and we are well out of them for the present. Time enough to attack when we are either attacked or menaced, and we are neither at present nor likely to be. If Heera Singh<sup>3</sup> had not had internal trouble to deal with he might have troubled us, but he has been too insecure to attempt a foreign war and he will not attempt it except in very desperation, either to repel us, or as the last grand stake of a gamble to maintain his place at home by exciting the people against us. Of this there is no chance. The Sikhs might begin a war or a system of annoyance if we were elsewhere engaged but they know our power much too well to try us single-handed, and it must be plain to Heera Singh that his Campoos are not what they were in Ranjit Singh's time and are deteriorating daily. There is an ugly

disturbance staring him in the face in Kashmeer. The Punjab is very unquiet, and in fact matters are going on as satisfactorily as we could wish if we wish to have the country without much trouble, which I suppose we do.

I have much anxiety about the native protected States, and the Nizam's is going to ruin as fast as it can gallop, I don't like to hear this at all for many reasons and would fain see it arrested. This can only be effected by interposition with a firm but honest purpose, such as sent Lord E. to Gwalior, but not with the same result. I would do away with the non-interference policy and make it protective; some few people might talk nonsense about this in the India House, but, rely on it, it is the true policy, not to the Rajas only but to ourselves. How much better to have an attached people under proper superintendence, like Mysore for instance, than a population ripe for revolt, like the Nizam's, only afraid to move for fear of our bayonets. Think over this subject; it is a grand policy, and we ought to govern all India gradually even though we govern here and there in other names. The Nizam's Govt. is *in extremis*. As Mr. Palmer writes to me, 'a shipwrecked vessel and surrounded with plunderers, each striving with his neighbour to get the largest share'. The Nizam is too proud to ask for help, and he does not like Fraser at all and no wonder. He might make a European diplomatist but not a Resident at Hyderabad. He has neither authority nor influence, and if this Govt. had denied him the first, he might with tact have gained the other but he has not. No one cares for him personally, some fear him, and the Nizam dislikes him. I wish you would get the subject taken up editorially. Till some-

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disturbance staring him in the face in Kashmeer. The Punjab is very unquiet, and in fact matters are going on as satisfactorily as we could wish if we wish to have the country without much trouble, which I suppose we do.

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thing is done at home, no move is made here. I am sorry to hear from John too that the B. & F.<sup>4</sup> is going to die, at least for a time. The proprietors of the Foreign Quarterly have written to me for articles; a Mr. Kelly is Editor, is it respectable? They have put in the article on Education sent in to the B. & F., at last; perhaps opportunely as it turns out, but it was written 3 years ago and I quite forget what I wrote.

My little Raja is well, and Pid Naik very drunken though not otherwise troublesome. My roads are splendid and people come from a distance to see them. I have sent for a Phaeton of the newest Victoria pattern for the little fellow; perhaps riding in a carriage, which his ancestors never did, over good roads, may help him to form gentlemanly ideas. The roads are a blessing to all and people wonder how they did without them before! I am daily hard at work at revenue settlements which must last till March, but I have come to the banks of the Krishna alone to write letters which I take in to Lingsoogoor tomorrow. It is 24 miles but I shall ride over to breakfast.

P.S. *Lingsoogoor 25th.*

It is marvellous indeed about this Earldom to Lord E., but what will *not* your Cabinets do sometimes? I have sent a squib to Punch this month which he may let off perhaps against the noble Earl; if it is printed do not betray me. Thank God my child is well and happy.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Hugh, later Viscount, Gough (1779-1869), Commander-in-Chief in India.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Ellenborough had been made an earl on his return to England.

<sup>3</sup> Hira Singh had been assassinated three days before the date of this letter.

<sup>4</sup> *The British and Foreign Quarterly*, to which Taylor contributed.

## LETTER 35

[Taylor writes from Bohnal, a village where there was a tank, that is, a lake, on which he could sail the boat which had been built by two carpenters at Lingsugur to plans drawn by him. *Story of My Life*, p. 200.]

*Bohnall, Shorapoor 24th January 1845*

To receive your letters, to be assured of all your warm sympathies, to feel that she who is gone from me was so loved, and is lamented by all, has been to me this month very precious. And though every one of those letters brings to memory more immediately and vividly a thousand happy events which she joined in and delighted to dwell on afterwards, and which had been our happiest moments of life, I can read, and dwell on, all calmly now. What I have felt, what I feel, that perpetual dreary blank, never filling up, *you* know. I might have gone away for change here or there, but I have not done so. I do not feel relief in change but rather a stronger disposition to be sad, so I took my stand on my old ground, and by God's aid I have won a victory. I fear not now, and the years of solitude which I must pass, strange and unnatural as they must appear to you who are surrounded by the most refined and soothing influences, will be welcome if I can only come to you again and renew my connection with civilization while my heart is green and fresh enough to understand it. This is all I desire in life, and may such part as remains, be mercifully free from misery. Here is a new year; may it be one of peace to us all; more we dare not to hope for.

I have been to Lingsoogoor for Xmas, indeed you know this for I sent my last to you from there. A party of

people came to me on the 8th inst. for some days and with them my child who is curiously intelligent I think, and very fond and loving. The whole have gone on to Muktl, 50 miles, on a visit and return in a few days to Lingsoogoor. After then as soon as possible I shall send Amy home to my kind good aunts who have wished her to be with them and Ally, and I am only too thankful that the sisters will be together and my mind will be easy on the thousand subjects of anxiety which would have arisen under other arrangements.

There is a new revolution in Lahore which, however it might have been looked for by men of local experience or pretended wiseacres, has I confess surprised me coming so soon, treading so rapidly upon the consolidation of power to which Heera Singh apparently attuned his adjustment of differences with Gulab Singh of Jummoo. But these military native States are in truth volcanoes and no one can pretend to argue at what time eruption will break out, involving all in a common ruin. It is presumed that an administration unfavourable to our interests will ensue under the Maharanee and Heera Singh Majeetia who is allowed to be a clever man, but I think he is hardly a wise one who puts his head in peril at the hands of those lawless ruffians who compose the Lahore soldiery, men who have thrown off all pretence of control or administration except what will accede to their violent and rapacious demands. If the administration throws itself into the hands of the G.G. will he have it at any price? I question it much, yet he may do so, particularly if there is danger to be apprehended from Golab Singh who may, actuated by ambition or a love of plunder, descend from his hills

and ravage the country—A short time will decide much now. I take it, meanwhile, you may speculate as you like in England. We have enough of war at present to consume extra finances, and that most miserable Kolapoor affair has spread to the Concan<sup>1</sup> jungles north and south and bids fair to last for many a day to come. A large army is cutting its way through jungles to fight men they can't find and who pick off officers and soldiers in a very certain manner from behind trees and bushes. They are likely to have an active hot weather and in the rains the country is utterly impracticable. Otherwise we are at peace, and the G.G. is perfectly quiet, how great a contrast to our new Earl!

My little kingdom is quiet and orderly, people more confident and intrigue at an end. It is a fine season and we shall have abundant revenue. I have got my boat here and an evening sail is delightful. I am going to build a cottage to retreat to when I am bothered, and am making a road, 7 miles, between this and Shorapoor.

<sup>1</sup> The Concan, now written Konkan, the area stretching along the coast from Bombay to Goa. The scene of operations was the State of Sawantwadi. Any unrest in the southern Bombay districts was a cause of anxiety to Taylor, as they contained many of the same race as the inhabitants of Shorapur.

## LETTER 36

[In the Punjab the successor of the murdered Hera Singh, Jawahir Singh, the youthful brother of Rancee Jindan, mother of the infant ruler Dhulip Singh, had little authority. He was himself murdered by the soldiery in September of this year. Sir H. Hardinge exercised great patience and sought to postpone as long as possible the contest which was in fact inevitable. It proved to be much more severe than Taylor here anticipated.]

*Camp Jeritgi of Shorapoor 27th Feby. 1845*

There seems little doubt that the G.G. has made up his mind to come to conclusions with Lahore, which since the late revolution is in a strange state of confusion and anarchy. A portion of the army there, has made an advance towards the Sutlej; and is encamped at Kankach, some miles from Lahore. There appears however to be no leader nor has the object of the move transpired save that the native news-writers write that the troops are going to eat the British and Golab Singh. No doubt, however, the Political Agents have transmitted every information. For my own part, I don't think they will take a step further, though some braggart Sikh *may* rush in to his destruction and lead the rest of the army to theirs. Since the last revolution, however, the Govt. have been pushing troops up to the N.W. and particularly to Ferozepoor. Arsenals are all busy with the manufacture of ball-cartridge, rockets, etc; and, though there is no talking about war, there seems to be a pretty fair appearance of one. If Lord E. had been here we should have been in the Punjab two months ago; as it is, we wait apparently for the first shot from Lahore; and I am glad of this for everyone will see that this war, whenever it comes, is inevitable, and that is all I have wished to see from the first. Sir H. H. is too good and too old a soldier to risk anything. We shall see the thing done overwhelmingly, and therefore more mercifully, than with small means provoking protracted opposition. The *Delhi Gazette* has a shrewd guess that the Ranee, Jowahir Singh and others, weary of the army, wish to precipitate it upon the British to ensure its annihilation and will keep themselves aloof from the consequences,

but this, though a choice morsel of native policy, will hardly serve their turn, and, in spite of the squeamishness of many, if we begin we cannot leave off without subduing the kingdom, and pensioning rulers and sirdars, none of the pretenders to the throne having any very legitimate claims to it. We must wait for the denouement, but it is not far off, I suspect, and, when the army is in its place, we may have a manifesto. Another month may shew something or it may be that the G.G. will station the troops and wait till next season, this being already far advanced, and hot weather hard upon us. 50,000 men is said to be the contemplated amount of the army and it will be enough. What could possibly withstand it in the Punjab where the force has lost leaders and discipline!

I have no local news. The Company's authorities to the westward have been apprehensive about my Beudars but they do not need to be so, for they are perfectly quiet. We have a fine harvest, and my revenue is not only increasing but coming in without trouble. The Nizam's Govt. is going to the bad silently but surely, and the whole country is miserably mismanaged. The Nizam has no money, even at this season of collection, and what in the world he is to do as the year progresses, I know not. I am right well, but sorely hard worked in Jummaabundee,<sup>1</sup> I wish I had a larger establishment, but Govt. are stingy and won't give me more. I write this in a hot tent full of bad smelling people who are all talking at the top of their lungs, I hardly know what I have said, but I cannot wait to think, so farewell.

<sup>1</sup> The Jamabandi or annual settlement which fixed the amount to be paid by the cultivators in the coming year.

## LETTER 37

[The letter is partly concerned with family matters of little interest, not here reproduced. Reeve had evidently written with some doubt about the preparatory school in which Taylor's elder daughter was being taught. Taylor writes, 'It is a peculiar deprivation to Indian parents, for which there is no remedy, that in the great matter of their children's welfare or education they are helpless.']

*Camp Jewarjee 25th March 1845*

I write to you from the same spot, and as I believe on the same day that I did last year,—how changed is my situation! This was a very favourite spot of my poor Mary's, for there are some noble trees here under which our tents were then, as these are now, pitched. How often have we strolled about beneath them, or sat out in the soft moonlight and spoken of you all, longing to return to you! I little thought of the present reality then, but God's will be done, I have already learned vast comfort from the past and the passing time does but make the lesson more impassive and easy.

We have no prominent news this month, and are as dull as the best wishers to civilization could desire. Sir Henry seems busy with his education views and goes from college to school and school to college distributing rewards and encouraging students in a very praiseworthy manner, the good of which will henceforth be manifest, in the advancement, morally, of young India. He has lately made an evident impression at the Mahomedan College which under the old regime was a hot bed of intolerance, and absurd Mahomedan science and theology. These remain in a great degree, but the study of English has been taken up, and we may trust to its attractiveness and practical

utility in distancing its old rivals in the present intellectual race. Otherwise nothing appears doing legislatively or politically to attract attention. The Punjab frontier has been strongly strengthened, and we may observe, in comparative absence of apprehension, the wild scenes of anarchy which are being enacted and will be enacted for some time to come ere we interfere.

One cannot speculate on Punjab politics with any safety from one day to another. The Khalsa troops and old Golab of Jummoo may come to blows or may not; if they do what then? who can say? If the Khalsa troops win, they will get the Jummoo treasury and return to Lahore to quarrel among themselves for the plunder and to set up Peshora Singh<sup>1</sup> or anybody Singh for the hour or month or year only, to cut his throat at the end, or when they are tired of him. The troops are the Pretorian Guards of Lahore and we have only to look into Gibbon to see what a mess they made of their Emperors and Empire. These at Lahore are if possible more ferocious, and uncontrollable.

Every where else India is quiet, and James Outram<sup>2</sup> has brought the rascally Kolapoor war to a close by his characteristic activity, which few in India can rival. The Bombay Govt. have made him Resident at Sattara, the best thing they had to give him, Ovens having gone home. There is nothing to do there, I believe, but he can well afford now to rest from his labours and enjoy his *otium cum dignitate*. The most prominent matter of the month is the Napierian pamphlet,<sup>3</sup> which has really excited a sensation. The *Bombay Times* very ably, and very coolly, has taken the book to pieces, and, not having the dread of the Copyright act before his eyes, has published about



half of the book bit by bit with foot notes, which are as complete a refutation of its main positions as can well be conceived and makè the mad Governor of Guernsey look very small. In fact the whole appears to be a tissue of claptrap lies, and the virulence of the language, and its absolute falsehood, surely calls for reprehension. Save me from my friends and I will save myself from my enemies, may C. Napier well cry. He has evidently been writing cock and bull stories to his brother of Guernsey, who has swallowed and digested them all and turned them out again in as stinking and offensive a manner as may be. If you can get hold of the criticism, by all means read it and I have no doubt it will be reprinted in England, or you can get a copy for a shilling from Smith & Elder of Cornhill, the B.T. agents. I think it will amuse you.

I have sent my father the best part of my annual report on *my kingdom*, which he will send you to read if you desire it. It will give you a fair idea of how matters progress, and where there are yet obstructions. The main difficulty I have to contend with is the expenditure, which in Pid Naik's imbecile hands it is next to impossible to control. I trust Fraser will interfere decidedly; indeed he must do so if the Govt. debts are to be paid during the minority, which was the main object of my being placed here. I believe, however, the affairs are still under the deliberation of the Supreme Govt. whose intentions will no doubt be made manifest ere long. In all other respects the progress is satisfactory to me and Fraser has expressed himself very handsomely in regard to it.

<sup>1</sup> Peshawara Singh claimed to be a son of Ranjit Singh, and aspired to the Punjab throne. He was put to death in September of this year.

\* The Kolhapur trouble did end at this time but the disorder in Sawantwadi, where Outram showed characteristic energy, continued for some time longer.

\* The 'Napierian pamphlet' was the *Conquest of Scinde* written by Sir Charles Napier's brother Sir William, Governor of Guernsey and famous as the historian of the Peninsular war. The book on Scinde, though brilliantly written, contained so many inaccuracies and was so unfair to various individuals that it roused a storm of protest. Taylor, of course, writes as a partisan of Outram to an extent which makes him speak well of his old opponent, Buist, the Editor of the *Bombay Times*.

## LETTER 38

[Taylor seems, as often, less than fair in his criticism of Fraser's policy. The views of D. A. Malcolm may be gathered by an article ascribed to him, which was published in the *Calcutta Review* in 1849, but was obviously written four or five years before. Though that article is professedly on the Nizam's army, it refers to the administration and the condition of the State. In mentioning 'the spectacle of this once flourishing country reduced to a state of poverty, anarchy, and wretchedness by the vices and abuses of its rulers', he states that 'the machine has been going downhill for the last fifty years', and that 'the Nizam is consistent in nothing but in his prejudices and in his opposition to the views of the Resident'. Malcolm regarded the cost of the contingent as an unnecessarily heavy drain on the revenues of the State; but, so long as it existed, it had to be punctually paid. It was for this reason that Fraser wished to have some districts placed under European supervision without alienating them from the Nizam's dominions.]

*Shorapoor 24th April 1845*

I write you see again from Shorapoor having been fairly driven in from the country by the heat, and am right glad to get under a solid roof. While I was out I had trees to pitch my tents under, but canvas, be it ever so thick, is a poor substitute for stone walls, and I shall not go out again for a long time. In truth I have finished the best part of my work and the rest, four small districts, can be

finished here in comparative comfort. It is no joke I assure you to be in a tent with the thermometer at 100°, and to be subjected to the complicated smells of 50 or 60 village Patells<sup>1</sup> and accountants and with this to have to examine most complicated accounts, dispute the price of land and raise rents. Nevertheless I have made a very fair season of it, and put some 20,000 Rs. into our little treasury which will provide for many wants, present and future, and I have put accounts and other matters in so fair a train withal, that people can hardly go wrong. I have adopted the old-established Hindoo system as best suited to the people; any change would not be understood, and I think one vice of the Company's revenue settlements is that they are perpetually being subjected to the trials of theories of smart Collectors and talented Assistants. The old Hindoos had as good an eye to their revenue as we have, and their systems were far from oppressive under just agents. However I am not going to inflict a lecture on land tenures and revenue settlements upon you. Malcolm, Fraser's Assistant, is gone to Calcutta by command of the G.G., to confer with him on general matters connected with the Nizam's State, and what he may do I don't know. The Resident aims at getting power at Hyderabad for which I doubt his practical fitness, but I do not think that the G.G. will go the lengths he wishes in his interference with the Nizam's Govt. The greatest object desired short of this is the making over of districts to be managed by European officers, for the pay of the Contingent. 36 lakhs of country would be required and the Nizam would look very cross, I imagine, if they were formally demanded. There was much trouble about the pay-

ments last year and the Resident was obliged to make advances from the Res<sup>y</sup> treasury; these now amount to some 8 lakhs of rupees, I suspect, and there is no satisfactory provision for the future apparent from the Nizam's Govt., so that there is some chance of districts being demanded and, if demanded and not given, it will follow I suppose that they will be taken. I don't know what Fraser will do with the districts if he gets them. Some say that Dighton<sup>2</sup> will be appointed Head Collector and will have four officers under him, but what it will all end in is of course mere matter of speculation as yet. I should by no means object to a more extended jurisdiction about here, keeping Shorapoor, but I should not like to leave the place or the people, after having won them to my ways in a great measure. Malcolm asked me for a memo on Shorapoor affairs past and present, which I have sent him, to be laid before Council, and I hope this will lead to some decided measures of relief or improvement. Government is security to the Nizam and to Sahoo-kars for near 8 lakhs of Rupees, and how this is ever to be recovered, unless some very decided steps are taken in regard to the control of Pid Naik and the treasury I don't know. I have pointed out very distinctly, I think, that much of this sum is unjust, and a discovery of a small matter of forgery, or rather forged alteration, in one of the State bonds, on which alteration 2 per cent per month interest is demanded, will, I hope, lessen or obliterate the demand for interest, but in any case there must be a large balance and Pid Naik has certainly no idea of paying anything till he is obliged, as I have told them from the first. Old Chundoo Lall is dead; he was a great man in his way, and would have been a

good Minister under proper control, but he was a bad one ; for, though nominated by us, we did not check him, and by his reckless profusion and miserable management he has entailed such heavy debts upon the State and such desolation on the country that both will take an age of nursing to recover, if indeed that be ever tried. Why we appoint or interfere to appoint Ministers, and then in the pretence of the non-interference policy hesitate to control them, passes my comprehension and ever will. The Sikhs are making no great stir, but I suppose old Golab will hold the reins and drive the coach shortly. Jowahir Singh will be put to death, and none will pity him, drunkard and cruel wretch as he is. We are apparently further from a Punjab war than 2 months ago, but there is no saying what may take place before the cold season. Now no one will move on either side. You will see by my letter what good things Sir H. H. is doing, and how practically active he is in removing old abuses and breaking down old prejudices. He is a capital G.G., just the man we wanted after Lord E., and his administration cannot be too much praised. Eventually, if it proceeds as it has begun, it will stand above that of Lord Wm. Bentinck ; which is the highest praise I can give it. I am longing to see whether there will be any debate on the Ellenborough question, but his friends will be hardy to bring him forward. They can only talk claptrap about various matters, which will not bear dissection.

I have some thought of running over to Lingsoogoor for a few days to see my child but I must look about me here just a little. I only came in two days ago, and I have seen no one on business yet as I have been writing letters

since yesterday. But I suspect Pid Naik has broken all his promises about keeping a reserve revenue, at which Govt., if it be the case, will be very angry.

My house looks and feels more desolate than ever, but you know that this is to be borne, and you have had longer experience of this than I have. If you can feel alone in the midst of your crowded city and a host of acquaintances, how much more I among these people, so utterly uncompanionable! I wish I could command books, but they are out of my reach, and though I have some, they are grown old to me. I have half a story written and will see if I can't finish it before winter. I never lack occupation now, though my busiest time of collection and settlement is past, or nearly so, and at others there are only a few complaints, and general superintendence; enough however to keep me up to work, and from complete stagnation. I shall go to Hyderabad in June or July with Amy and perhaps take her to Madras, but I am not quite clear yet, much depends on the issue of Malcolm's mission. I have obeyed orders regarding the half sides of the sheets, and am very proud that I am still liked. One cannot always be the same and D. will make every allowance I am sure for work and often oppression.

<sup>1</sup> The Patel or village headman. In this part of the country the office was hereditary in one family.

<sup>2</sup> Dighton, see Letter 2, note 8. It will be noticed that Taylor, in spite of his low opinion of Dighton, was willing to contemplate the possibility of serving under him, in charge of a district.

## LETTER 39

[Just when Taylor had surmounted the initial difficulties at Shorapur, he was shaken by the news that he would be displaced by an officer of the Company's service, directly under the orders of the Governor-General. The idea of such an appointment was probably due to the fact that the Indian Government was practically responsible for the administration of Shorapur and for the payment to the Nizam of his dues. It was not unnatural that that Government should have thought it desirable to appoint one of their own officers rather than one who was in the Nizam's service. It probably soon became apparent that, as Taylor observes, no officer would go willingly from Upper India to the petty and remote Shorapur State. Taylor was therefore allowed to remain in peace. It appears from Reeve's Preface to the *Story of My Life* that John Stuart Mill, then holding an important position at the India House, interested himself in the matter.]

*Shorapoor, 12th June 1845*

I missed last month's mail altogether by a very stupid mistake about the date.

Your letter did in truth find me full of cares, both for what was then going on of my business, a heavy mass of Bankers' accounts full of errors and falsifications, and for the dread of losing the business altogether, which has been confirmed, I fear without hope of alteration. You will be very sorry to hear that I am afraid that I have all but lost Shorapoor. That is, my successor is not appointed yet, and all I have to do is to look for the post every morning in the expectation of seeing his name gazetted, or hearing officially on the subject from the Resident. Thank God, however, that I am not to blame, nor in any way questioned as to my proceedings. My removal arises from other causes not in any way connected with me personally;

at least, so far as I can understand, they are the following. I heard last month, that the Court of Directors, alarmed at the large sum for which they appeared to be guarantee here, had called for the whole of the correspondence in regard to Shorapoor affairs for the last 16 years, and, having thoroughly sifted it, very naturally found fault with many obvious blunders, with the guarantees and with the general policy in regard to the State. On this they sent out an order to Calcutta which arrived about 2 months ago, I understand, that the affairs of Shorapoor were to be placed directly under the Supreme Govt., independent of the Resident at Hyderabad, and that the Supreme Govt. was to appoint an agent, a Bengal Civilian, to the charge of the relations with the State which were to be newly modified. Genl. Fraser wrote part of this to me on the 5th May and Malcolm part from Calcutta. I have heard the rest from private sources, but nothing officially as yet. I can very well understand how the Court came to the decision, and expected a reversal of some of the acts of the last 3 years, but I was not prepared for so entire a change, and least of all to see Fraser so snubbed, as he is by the direction of the affairs being taken out of his hands. True he has done nothing, which the Court has seen; and has taken no responsibility on himself when he might often have ventured a little, perhaps, and this may have led them to the conclusion that his intervention was useless; and, as he referred everything to the Supreme Govt., that the affairs of Shorapoor could be more easily and firmly managed without him than with him. If I had been withdrawn and he had been directed to appoint another agent, I should have understood that I was found



fault with, but he is put aside, and I go with him on *this* account. You know I am a local officer, I can serve the Company *through* the Resident, but I could not serve the Company independent of him, unless indeed I had a local Company's Commission, which I am not likely to have. It would be an aggravation of the affront put on General Fraser, if I, his subordinate, were taken out of his hands, and directed to correspond direct with the Foreign Secretary, or even to pass my letters under a flying seal through the Residency, and, though they may snub the old General, yet, from his character and high office, I don't think they would affront him. You see I am of no account at all, if they remove *him*, and my only hope is that in consideration of all the circumstances of the case they may not do so. I think it probable also that the Nizam may object to his Tributary being directly taken out of his hands; indeed I have heard that he has answered the Governor General's communication relative to Shorapoor very evasively, and whether this may lead to any modification I know not. All I have been able to do to save my place was to write to Mr. Hardinge<sup>1</sup> the Private Secy. I sent my letter through the General and recd. the reply yesterday, which is this 'In reply to your letter of the 12th ult. I am directed to state that the arrangements contemplated by the Gov. Gnl. for the management of the Shorapoor State affairs, will require the appointment of another agent unconnected with the recent events which have passed in that State, and I very much regret that I cannot hold out any expectations that the retention of your services will come within the scope of the measures now under consideration. Yrs. C. S. Hardinge P.S.' I understand by

‘recent events’ those of the period of my appointment for I have made no reforms nor have there been any troubles since November; those previously were merely local. I have written to Sir T. Turton<sup>2</sup> to see if he can get me helped in any way and have not yet received his answer. I did not know, indeed, that he had arrived in Calcutta at the time I wrote to the P.S., or wd. have written to him simultaneously with the other. I must wait now, and I fear to little purpose, as the reply has been given now. Turton will do anything he can for me, I am sure, but you will have seen, I think, by what I have written, that the matter cannot be influenced by any private considerations, and that my being a local officer effectually precludes me from being employed independent of the Resident. I shall be very sorry to leave Shorapoor, and 500 Rs. a month is a sore loss, sorer because I had been led to think by Lord Ellenborough’s dispatch to me that it would be permanent and that I could reasonably expect to become independent in comparatively few years. If I go, I shall fall back on the Command of a Regt. which is 1000 Rs. a month, but I should be at more expense in a cantonment than here, and the expense of settling myself as Commandant would be considerable. I don’t like the idea of Military duty at all, but beggars must not be choosers. I shall be grieved to leave all that I have begun and should have been able to carry out had I been helped at all, but I shall have at least the consciousness of having laboured for good, so far as body or mind would allow. I think a new man will have many difficulties to contend with which I have not, and he must go through the same chicanery and fraud which I have done till he detects it,

ignorant of language and people. I don't know whether Govt. will recompense me for my house which I built on their own promise, in fact I know nothing more than I have told you and must wait with all the patience I can muster the issue of the Calcutta deliberations. I wish I had had a little personal interest with Sir Henry, that might have helped me; yet perhaps not, and there is no use fretting about it.

I was a fortnight with my child who was well and much improved, very gentle, intelligent and loving. She has a sweet face, and is most engaging. This movement upsets my plans about her, and really I have had half a mind to bring her to you all and stay a year to shake off sorrow and worry. The worst is the loss which attends absence from duty.

I think they will have some difficulty in getting a man to take the post. Bengal civilians don't like to leave the sphere of their own Service; they cannot send a lad, and the allowances, unless increased, will not tempt a man of even 5 years standing.

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Hardinge, the eldest son of the Governor-General, later the 2nd Viscount Hardinge.

<sup>2</sup> Turton, see Letter 2, note 5.

## LETTER 40

[Taylor continues to write in great anxiety. It is interesting to find William Palmer still in the thick of intrigue, and well posted in all that went on in the Resident's office: but such leakage, real or supposed, has always existed. Neither Palmer nor Taylor was fair to Fraser, who, as is clear from Mill's letter in the Preface of Taylor's Autobiography and from Fraser's own letters to Taylor, had supported the latter's action, and his retention at Shorapur.]

*Shorapoor 11th July 1845*

Since I wrote last I have been in a state of uncertainty regarding myself. I have heard nothing officially from General Fraser, there is no report of a successor to me either at Hyderabad or Calcutta so far as I can discover, and, were it not for a letter from the Private Secretary to the G.G. in answer to one I wrote from Lingsoogoor on private matters, which is unfavourable to my expectations, I should consider that Govt. had come to some other conclusion regarding the management of Shorapoor, and did not intend to displace me. The letter of the P.S. is, however, almost too conclusive to hope much from. Mr. Hardinge writes, 'with regard to the facts stated in your last letter which I have submitted to the G.Genl. I am directed to state that his Ex. very much regrets the necessity of appointing an officer unconnected with the recent events at Shorapoor and for making other arrangements for the administration of the affairs of that State, after being made acquainted with the substance of your letter. At the same time I am directed to state, that the Governor General can hold out no hopes to you of making any arrangement differing from that alluded to in my former letter, and I very much regret I am not enabled to be the channel of communicating better news to you.' If therefore my hopes of remaining had rested alone on the G.G., I might fairly abandon all, but I have still one ground of expectation remaining, and this is that I understand from good authority that the Nizam has written strongly against the entire management of Shorapoor by the Company through its own agent. I heard this from my native Vakeel who has resided at Hyderabad for some

time and came down the other day to see me. He informs me that at his audience of leave with Surajool Moolk, who is the Nizam's Foreign Minister, so to speak, he was desired to wait, and Surajool Moolk taking him aside told him to tell me that the Nizam was not pleased with the G.G.'s letter regarding Shorapoor, and had desired him to reply 'that Shorapoor had been recognised in treaties as dependant on and tributary to him, that, although he had not opposed my appointment as manager of affairs, as I was his servant as well as the Company's, yet he did not see on what principle Shorapoor could now be taken from him, and directed by the Company, as the country was quiet, and affairs going on satisfactorily; that he had made no opposition to the appointment of a Dewan and if that person was considered unworthy by the Company, he should receive no support at Hyderabad and could be removed, and the sole direction of affairs given to me with the approval of both Govts'. Now if the Nizam has written this it *may* have an effect at Calcutta. They would hardly pick a quarrel with the Nizam about such a trifle as this State and its direction, especially when there are other points in discussion between the high parties; and the Nizam's representation appears fair and just. Under proper instructions, if I did not carry out the intentions of Govt., I should deserve to be removed as a blockhead, but when I have had none for the last two years, it appears rather hard to alter the management of affairs, without giving me a chance of shewing that I can do what is required. The account of my vakeel tallies with that of a letter from Malcolm, in which he says that the Nizam has given a crusty and stiff answer to the G.G.'s letter,

which may influence the Calcutta Councils. That letter could not have reached Calcutta when the last reply was written to me, and on this ground alone can I account for the delay which has occurred. I have written again to the P.S. in regard to his expression, twice repeated, of 'recent events' at Shorapoor. There have been no recent events whatever. Ever since last November, I have avoided discussion with Pid Naik in regard to the expenditure, and have left that point to be settled by Govt., when they should see by the accounts that he had deliberately and wilfully broken all his engagements with me. I gave the P.S. a concise relation of what events had occurred, without making any attempt at justification of myself, for, being accused of nothing, I can justify nothing, but begged, if I had been found fault with, I might be allowed one opportunity of explanation, either official or personal, and that I should prefer the latter myself as offering more opportunity for clear statement, and being the less liable to misunderstanding. I sent the letter to Fraser, but he begs me to forward it myself, as, having asked why I had been removed, and received no reply, he feared he could not consistently pursue the correspondence in an unofficial manner. He entirely approved of my letter and he added, that, if he was allowed an opportunity of giving an official opinion regarding my direction of these affairs, it would give him pleasure to do so in such terms as he conceived I merited. I forwarded the letter a few days ago and shall await a reply, if one is given, with some anxiety. Meanwhile another subject of consideration has arisen which I have reported to Govt., and that is the state of Pid Naik. I daresay I told you in my last that he was very ill; now

he is better as far as bodily health is concerned, but he has become quite foolish, and is at times decidedly insane. I suspect he had a bad fit of delirium tremens after his last drinking bout, which being neglected has turned into confirmed insanity, or at least foolishness. Will this have any effect in keeping me here, or will it hasten the Govt. measures? I have reported it at all events; and that at present the entire management of affairs is conducted by me in conjunction with the authorities. A pretty mess matters would have been in by this time if I had not been here and a pretty lot of intrigues would have been set on foot. If a man is sent at this juncture, he will have no pleasant time of it; he will have to wade through the same quantum of chicanery and intrigue which I have done, and, if he is a rash fellow, may get to loggerheads with the people. I cannot really see what is to be gained by a new state of affairs, and only hope that Govt. may see this, and, in reference to local management, issue such directions as may enable me to carry on the administration as I have done hitherto, but with more authority as to the control of the disbursements. In any case you see I must wait till next month to tell you of my fate, and I shall have, I know, all your cordial hopes, that I may remain where I am. This is just the time, when, if I were in no uncertainty, and Govt. wd. let me know what it requires, I could carry my point without a shadow of opposition. The Dewan's partizans have broken among themselves, being without a head; some have joined me in conducting affairs better, and there is a better spirit generally prevalent, which has arisen out of conviction of the past mismanagement, which I could turn to great ad-

vantage. But you will estimate that I am in a peculiar and delicate position just now, no light being thrown on the intentions of Govt. in regard to the State. There is not a post which I do not open with anxiety, nor a newspaper to which I do not look with apprehension, that a new Act may have been published regarding Shorapoor, or a successor appointed to me. I confess I should like to go to Calcutta. I could tell them more in a quarter of an hour regarding the place, and transactions present and past, than they could gather from the contradictory correspondence of the last 16 years which they have collected. The journey would be a pleasant change for me, and I should become personally known to the Secretaries, which is a great matter. Turton could do nothing for me; he does not know Sir Henry personally, and applied through the Military Secy, Major Fitzroy Somerset, who sent him the same reply as the P.S. had sent to me. I have asked Turton again to get me sent for if possible, that is, if my coming would lead to any kind of explanation. Fraser still remains sore and hurt about the affair; he can get no satisfaction apparently, and people say he ought to resign. This, however, he will not do. I don't think he stands high with Govt. and in his letters to Gresley and myself Govt. cannot have failed to observe a great deal of vacillation, and weakness. Gresley told me he was an unsatisfactory man to serve under, and that he could neither help himself nor his subordinates in an emergency, and such appears to be the case now. Whatever happens my conscience is clear regarding the affair; I have done the best I could, and could have done much more, if there had been a little more decision and firmness at Hyderabad.



Getting no orders, Fraser has funk'd the responsibility of issuing any, and that has often placed me, as I have told you, in a painful position, and hindered much which could have been done.

Mr. Palmer and I have interchanged a good many letters on the subject, he writing me local opinions prevalent at the Residency, and I answering them from the facts which have transpired. We have fairly exhausted the subject, and he writes a few days ago. 'You ask whether money is still demanded from the Nizam's Govt. for Shorapoor. Yes, it was asked for by the Resident a year ago. No answer was given by the Nizam's Govt. Last month the demand was renewed. I do not know whether any answer has been given. As you say, therefore, if you are wrong, why should this demand be made upon your arguments? I will not trouble you to copy your letter, but I fear that Truth is the objectionable quality in all Indian correspondence. Lord Wellesley told Sydenham, on the occasion of Col. Kirkpatrick's having reported demi-officially, "that he had bullied the Nizam into concession", "that diplomatic letters ought to be written as if for History"—you have clearly made out a case of injustice against the Company, and you are an unworthy servant! They have been forced into your views by your truthful expositions, but don't feel at all the more thankful to you for it. You say you only got a dry answer on this point. If the answer was General Fraser's, although his commentary upon your conduct in his report to Govt. should not have been more distended, and he restricted himself to enclosing copies, the very tone of his letter would have directed a scrutinizing attention towards you, or suggested prejudice against

you. But General Fraser, if it did not belong to him, must have felt it necessary to explain his own views and those probably implicated you. If such has been the case the result has been capital poetical justice, for whilst he has pointed the dissatisfaction of Govt. towards you, they have not thought better of his opinion and they have discredited him by taking away the charge of Shorapoor from his management.'

Again—'Your last letter is very satisfactory to me, from its exhibition from official correspondence that General Fraser has been all along satisfied with your measures. I can but return therefore to the old position, the dissatisfaction of the Directors with the Nuzzerana and amount of revenue levied from Shorapoor. You have nothing to say to that. Inaction gave a corrupt sanction to the arrangement, and the nepotism of the Directors won't allow them to comment upon it.'

I give you these extracts only to shew another opinion besides my own. I don't think the General has written against me, but, where a man writes to another who sends on his letters with comments which cannot be known to the first party, he is placed in an awkward and uncertain position. I have felt this; but I took my line at first, doubtful perhaps that it would please, and under the continued commendatum which I have recd. from Fraser, I could only conclude that my opinions and measures were supported by him. I shall never know the truth I daresay, but if they let me remain I shall be perfectly satisfied, and ask no questions.

I have nothing to write about but myself so pardon the egotism of this letter. We are, that is, India is, in a state

of the most satisfactory political somnolence, which I trust may last. Cholera has sobered the vagabond Sikh soldiery for a time and there is no stir at Lahore, or anywhere else. I have just completed a beautiful new road along the top of the wooded ridge west from my house, and can take a drive for 3 miles in the Phaeton I have got for the little Raja. The road has been occupation for the month, and has cost the state 240 Rupees, so cheap is labour here; it is 18 feet broad. I can now get about for a ride or drive without going into the town which is a great consideration for which my successor, if one comes, will be devoutly thankful to me. I have sometimes thought that a private recommendation to Sir Henry might have helped me at this crisis, but it is perhaps too late to speculate upon that, and if I were worth retaining on official grounds, which are better than private ones, I shall be retained. Yet if it lies in your power, and you know anyone who could write a word for me of general recommendation, would you kindly get it? I believe that interest, so to speak, does not do much in the Indian Service nowadays, but it might help me to be known as an object of interest to a friend of the G.G.I.

Are you to have the Ellenborough flare up? It will be rare fun to hear the debate and nearly as good to read it. Punch calling the Earl a whitlow which no one would prick, was capital; Peel ought to allow the debate at the end of the session by way of general relaxation and amusement to the public.

## LETTER 41

[Taylor writes with natural relief at the news that he was to stay at Shorapur. It is curious to find Fraser, through William Palmer, advising Taylor to use any influence he had at the India House ; but this is a further proof of the Resident's constant kindness to Taylor.]

*Shorapoor, August 19th 1845*

I have two letters of yours to acknowledge by this mail, i.e. of June and July, and render hearty thanks for them. The first arrived when I was still anxious and fidgetty about my position. The latter has found me relieved of all apprehension regarding myself and my *Iqbal*<sup>1</sup> predominant over malignant influences. This it will, I know, sincerely rejoice you to hear, for my two last letters will have been full of all sorts of speculations on the probable cause of my projected removal and I know you will have felt with me that it was anything but pleasant to be hustled out of one's appt., in a mysterious and unsatisfactory manner, without any sort of reason being given by Govt., and equally disagreeable to leave a comfortable house, settled habits, and a people among whom I had lived so long, and for whom I hoped to be able gradually to do much. All this, however, is past. On the 16th of last month I received a letter from Fraser (private), informing me that my projected removal had all along been an unintelligible mystery to him, and that he was very glad to tell me that I was to remain at Shorapoor, Govt. having suspended their intentions of removing me ; further that the Court had written a very handsome dispatch regarding my proceedings which he would send me offly. in a day or two. The

dispatch duly arrived ; it contains a general approval of my acts during my first tour of the country, and therefore I trust that the second general report, which you have seen, will prove to them more satisfactory as shewing that divers substantial results have followed the course which I then declared my intention of pursuing. I have sent a copy of the dispatch to my father, and it is curious to see how the minutiae of the revenue settlements of a few obscure villages have not escaped the attention of the Court, and the evident attention which has been bestowed on my correspondence of the period. There is a significant allusion to Pid Naik's position, and to the strengthening of my hands in regard to the affairs here, in as much as the Court declare, what I have urged from the first, that the Govt. of India is in point of fact Regent here, by its representative, and will have to answer for the consequences of mismanagement or neglect during the minority of the prince. These observations of the Court are, however, now of no use as regards Pid Naik who, poor man, after a long and miserable insanity and illness brought on by delirium tremens, was gathered to his fathers on the 8th of this month, an event long expected and apparently long inevitable. Before this occurred, I had proof of the effect which the Court's dispatch had produced, in an order to displace Pid Naik, should he be living when the order reached me, and to assume sole charge of the affairs. This goes at least to prove that I have not lost the confidence of Govt. and that, whatever had led to the proposal regarding another officer, no dissatisfaction had been entertained regarding my proceedings. I *suppose* I may assume this, as, if Govt. had been dissatisfied with me, they would, in

the displacement of Pid Naik, have sent an officer of their own, with the full powers which have been delegated to me. The order arrived when Pid Naik had had another paralytic stroke by which he lost the use of his right side, and was insensible, in fact dying. I therefore took upon me to delay the promulgation of the order for a few days and the poor man's family had at least the satisfaction of knowing that he held what honours he possessed to the last. On the 11th I held a Durbar and installed myself as Dewan, a ceremony which passed off very satisfactorily, the orders of Govt. being received with respect and unconditional submission by all the authorities. I daresay there are a few grumblers among the harpies who have so long preyed unchecked upon the vitals of the State, but they are few in number and very contemptible, and I hope I shall get along smoothly without experiencing factious opposition. Govt. would be little likely to put up with any, and I most certainly will not put up with nonsensical intrigues against or cavillings at my proceedings.

So far all you see is very satisfactory, and to the utmost extent of my wishes. Why Govt. sought to change matters here, I do not enquire nor seek to know. If they did not tell Fraser, they would not of course tell me, and it wd. be impertinent to ask after what has occurred. The course of correspondence has not been altered, though answers to various letters, which I have received lately from Hyderabad, state 'that copy of my dispatch has been submitted for the information of the Govt. of India'; from which I conclude that all letters were not formerly sent, whereas now they are, doubtless under instructions. Fraser sent me a private message through Mr. Palmer,

that he had doubts of the minutes of the Calcutta Council in regard to me, and begged I would use all the influence I might possess at the India House to counteract them. This warning comes rather late to be of use since, if the Council wrote at all, they must have done so with my general report of last year and their letter went in March last. I have written to F. that I have no interest at the India House and that I can only rely upon the Govt. or the Court's opinions of my proceedings. I, however, mention it to you and it strikes me that Mr. Mill, to whom Mr. Austin<sup>2</sup> once gave me an introduction when I was anxious to push our pension question, might be able to help me, if you know him well enough to make any comment on the subject. It is very likely that Shorapoor affairs will be directed by the Secret committee. Is not Mill Examiner to this department? and so all my correspondence must pass through his hands, and most likely he writes the Court's remarks on it. I have always heard that Mr. Mill and Mr. Peacock<sup>3</sup> are all-powerful in regard to the tone of dispatches, and a word of support from the Court would, as you must be aware, do me a world of good. I have no other prospect of help but this, if I need any, and am sure I can rely heartily on your affection, to aid me if it is in your power.

So much for Shorapoor politics. Locally the best thing I can say is that there are no intrigues and that I have no trouble beyond what clearing up the complicated and unsatisfactory accounts of the last regime will entail on me. The country is quite peaceful, cultivation is increasing, and an enormous demand for grain this year, with light assessments, has filled the farmers' pockets very

satisfactorily. All we want is rain, of which there is a distressing want at present, and a threatened failure of the early crops, but we have still 2 months of monsoon before us, and I have not lost hope. For two years the monsoons have held back sadly, but came in time to save the cotton and grain on which our revenue mainly depends.

There is but little news, none in fact, yet if the announcement that we are to conclude a subsidiary treaty with the Sikhs is true, there must be a Gwalior-like war in the cold weather. It is exceedingly probable I think. The Sikh Govt. must be as heartily sick of its soldiery as we are, and have very likely made up their minds to lose a little independence for the sake of enjoying peace and quiet and dying in the course of nature. If a subsidiary treaty is excusable in any case, it is this. We cannot take the country, as we might the Nizam's or Oude, under our own especial management, at least not for many years to come, and till that time it is good policy to cut the cat's claws and prevent that necessity for taking the country which would be inevitable were we scratched as matters stand at present. Help this subject if you think proper; as I have said, I see no alternative in regard to it. You say that my letters have been irregular of arrival to the T. I cannot account for this at all. There is no irregularity in my letters to my Father or others that I send over. Can there be delay or irregularity at Malta where they are directed in order to go by Express? If I should send them by any other route or to any other person, please let me know. Amy is with me and is a great comfort though I have only had her a few days. I am very anxious



about sending her home, and don't see my way at all. To move is quite impossible now, everything would go to sixes and sevens. I wish you could come to India. You might come and go to Shorapoor in 3 months when we have the Railway, a branch of which will come to Beejapoor 60 miles off, but when will this be? I see Gresley is a Committee man, and they could not have a better for he is well acquainted with the country and being a good surveyor, would give them surveyor's information. Without a railway it would take you 4 months to come and go here, *not more*, if you feel inclined to look at the Beudars, and self. I am humanizing the place by more roads, which give me pretty rides and drives in all directions, and will yet be extended.

I shall be far from sorry to see the Nizam's country brought under a Commission. Matters are very bad in the districts; a thousand Ryots and their families left their homes a month ago in a neighbouring district and went into the Company's territory, from where the Collector sent a deputation of them to Hyderabad to Fraser. If the Talookdar is dismissed, another will come as bad; it is the system, or rather no system, which is ruining the country. I don't think any Commission would affect us; on the contrary, while it might reduce the expenses of the army, which could not be dispensed with, it would provide for the real work more satisfactorily than at present and most likely give us pensions. Outram<sup>4</sup> has laid a stout cudgel on the shoulders of the Guernsey Napier and writes to me that he has applied for and received permission to expose the false statements in regard to Sinde, and that he is busy writing *his say* on the subject. Buist

the Edr. of the *B. Times* is in England and will have his say also I doubt not.

I am *very* sorry to hear of the gout. What, so soon? Try my plan, I am no teetotaller, nor do I belong to the Temperance Society, yet I never touch wine or Beer. This plan I have followed for a year and never had such perfect health before, and never could stand so much labour.

I hope you see the *Calcutta Review*. It is capital. The articles are purely Indian and, though not perhaps of your *Quarterly* or *Edinburgh* standard, still very respectable productions. The matter, however, is the main point and you will find two articles, one on the *lex loci* and one on Oude, which are worth reading. They want an article on the Nizam's country from me, but I dare not write as Shorapoor must come into it and I could not discuss Fraser's measures.

<sup>1</sup> *Iqbal*, fortune or destiny.

<sup>2</sup> John Austin (1790-1859), the writer on Jurisprudence, husband of Taylor's cousin Sarah.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866), novelist and poet, Chief Examiner at the India Office 1836-56.

<sup>4</sup> Outram's reply to Sir William Napier's book was not published till 1846, but a large portion of it had been circulated in type in 1845. He was probably assisted in its composition by Dr. Buist, already referred to.

## LETTER 42

[Taylor, not yet altogether free of the fear of being removed from Shorapur, gives his reasons for wishing to stay there. There was never any possibility, as he seems to suggest, of the Indian Government annexing the State.

This letter gives the first of many references, not reproduced in this book, to a coco-nut estate called Calmonné, which he had purchased from his cousin Robert Atherton, near Batticaloa, on the east coast of Ceylon. His brother Selby had already been

working on it and continued to manage it. Taylor was hopeful of making a large profit out of it, and in later letters advised Reeve to join in the enterprise. That it proved an entire failure may be judged from no mention being made of it in his Autobiography. Both Selby and another brother, Glanville, died in Ceylon, presumably from the effect of the climate of the low country in which the estate was situated.]

*Shorapoor, 25 October 1845*

I could not read your last letter without the thought that if matters had not turned out as they have, and I had left Shorapoor and gone home to you, I should have been very happy with you. On the subject of remaining here I did all that was necessary, I believe, to support my official character if that had ever been assailed, and having done this I left affairs to take their own course. I had then little hope of remaining and I was informed by the Secretary to the G.G. that the matter had been decided in Council. Malcolm wrote to me that he had found it cut and dry on his arrival in Calcutta. Turton wrote that there was no hope, as decision on the subject had long ago been made and I was only waiting the appointment of a successor and notice to quit, to arrange my affairs here and go to Hyderabad. I had fully determined then on bringing Amy to England and trying whether I could not get anything to keep me among you all, when the whole of the Council decision seemed to be most unaccountably reversed and I was directed to remain. Pid Naik was deposed and died and I became supreme. Whether this was any particular turn in the tide of my life I know not. It looks like one. I believe there is still a reference regarding the future administration of the State pending the decision of the Court of Directors, and, should it go against

me, I would scrape together what funds I could and come and see you to a very certainty. I do want change and mental invigoration (thank God the animal part of me is perfectly sound and strong). I cannot get either here. I often feel, as it were, a narrowing of my ideas and a stagnation which I believe inseparable from a complete segregation like this. I have no time to study, no intercourse with anything or person of intelligence. I have low cunning in its most repulsive forms constantly to combat and it is difficult at times to throw off, or rise superior to, the disgust it creates. Still, with all this, I am conscious of being able to effect good, and prosperity, and this, and the income which I have, and from which my quiet life enables me to make handsome savings in hope of a better future, cheer me on. If I can stay during the minority I should be independent after it and if not, why, as I said, I will come home, look about me and see if anything is to be had in Europe. I imagine, however, that I shall have to stay. I do not think any Calcutta man will take the place nor indeed any Civilian of any Presidency. It is too lonely and too rude for one who has not been accustomed to these kinds of natives. I had an idea that it would have been given to one of the Affghanistan men, for in point of allowance it is a handsome provision for anyone, and, if anyone displaces me, I think you will hear that it is a military man. Fraser wishes me to remain and is loud in my praise to everyone, as I hear from Hyderabad. But he is in constant hot water with his own Government, I understand, and cannot help me much. I am infinitely obliged to him for anything he may say or write regarding me, of course, but I feel that my remaining does not

depend on him and I shall remain, either because Government thinks me useful, or because no one else will take the place. I suppose a few months more will decide the matter. I know only one Director, Oliphant,<sup>1</sup> who will I know support me and from the tenor of the Court's last Dispatch I may presume it to be favourable to me. I am not conscious of having done anything to be blamed for, except, perhaps, speaking the truth, for that is a crime sometimes in Indian diplomacy but I believe the subjects on which I did excite discussion by my letters have become of little consequence, since the subject of them, Pid Naik, and his unfitness for office etc. have passed away, and, if Government find that affairs are conducted here without reference to them and that the district is quiet and the revenue seems increasing, I conclude they will not wish to disturb me, without indeed my removal becomes inevitable by the incorporation of this territory with the British. It is possible that this may come to pass if the Nizam's Government is suspended, as has been contemplated, and the British Government is not without a claim to this State as a tributary one. It was tributary to the Beejapoor Kings and to Delhi whose place we now fill, and also to the Peshwa whose territories and rights belong to us also. We voluntarily gave up our claims as the Peshwa's representatives in favour of the Nizam in the treaty or negotiations with him after the Mahratta war. But I conclude, as the strongest party, those rights or claims could be revived if we chose, on the ground that the Nizam's treatment of Shorapoor had been unjustifiably oppressive. In this case I suppose we should put our having very materially aided the oppression out of sight, but

this belongs to our Indian politicals to discuss and I have no right to beg the question, at any rate for the present. There is nothing to be gained from the State beyond the appointment of an officer and as it could not afford to pay one and it is not likely the Company's Government would saddle themselves with the expense of one, nor call upon the Nizam's Government to pay one of their own politicals, so, as I am paid by the Nizam, I dare say in the end it will be found more expedient to let me remain than to withdraw me. Lonely as the place is, I believe I shall be happier here than I ever should be in a military cantonment. I am at least free in every sense of the word. Military minutiae are distressing, except to minds peculiarly fitted for it, and mine is not one of them, and the dull routine of parades and drills, courts-martial and committees, most wearisome. Here at least there is work, work day and night too, and this enables me to endure the place. I am never idle for a moment and I thus enjoy most perfect health. As for society, that of India or our part of it has never had any charms for me. I dislike *Messes* and their general style and were I in a cantonment I should be nearly as lonely as I am here. Why then should I not remain? I repeat I am content to do so. I can see nothing better in the world at present except the society of those with whom my affections rest, and I will hope that the enjoyment of it is only postponed for a while,—not shut out from me for ever.

Since I wrote to you I have parted from my child who is, I hope, this day at Bombay. A very kind-hearted and, as I hear from all quarters, a most excellent woman, a Mrs. Stalker, the wife of an Officer of the Survey, hearing

that I wished to send Amy home, offered to take charge of her in her own cabin, and with her own child, if I could get her down to<sup>1</sup> Bombay in time for the steamer which takes this letter. It was a hurried matter but there was no time for hesitation. Henry Arrow,<sup>2</sup> my wife's cousin, started from Hyderabad on my summons, to meet me at Kulburga and I went on there with Amy. I arrived with her on the 5th. He came in on the 6th and started again with her in the evening of the 7th. They were at Sholapur on the 11th and I had hoped would reach Poona by the 20th. But Arrow was obliged to submit to be doctored at Sholapur as he was very unwell, and this detained him till the 14th when he started again. He was to reach Poona on the 22nd, would stay there a day, perhaps, to return my tents camels etc., and go on to Bombay in the mail Phaeton which now runs daily. He would reach Bombay next day and Mrs. Stalker wrote to me that she should be all ready to receive Amy.

It was a hard thing to part with this dear child for she is most lovable, but I felt it must be done, that to hesitate now would be to put off her departure for another year. My season of out-door work too is at hand, and it would never have done to drag her about with me. I must therefore have sent her to Lingsoogoor or to Hyderabad, where I could not have seen her, and why not therefore send her at once to those who will keep her as they have kept her sister? I have written to my father to meet her, and to bring Alice with him, to Southampton. Another consideration in retaining Shorapoor is that I have heavy responsibilities in regard to the children; for myself very little would suffice, but they require provision, and I could

not give up a certainty here for another struggle in life in your Western world which has gone ahead of me.

There is little news, you will have heard of the new Lahore murders, and the temper of the Khalsa troops. One can now no longer wonder at any occurrence however savage, and it will be a happy day when the State ceases to exist. I don't suppose that we shall go to war because Jowahir Singh<sup>3</sup> has been shot, but the smallest amount of bullying on the part of the Lahore Army would, I conclude, send us in to the Punjab to stop it for ever. Sir Henry must be at Agra by this time and will doubtless see and judge for himself. Fraser has not yet settled the matter about the Puttans<sup>4</sup> who murdered the Chuprassee. I hear the Nizam has been given to the end of the month to deliver up the people, turn all the Puttans out or take the consequences. I presume he will do the latter, as he can do neither of the former and, if there is a row, it will end in the country being governed by a Commission, I hope for its good, not by the Resident, as Mysore is, and whether this will at all affect us local officers I know not.

<sup>1</sup> Major, later Lieut.-Col., James Oliphant (1796-1881), Madras Engineers, who had served in the Hyderabad State.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Arrow, son of Captain James Arrow of the Bengal army, and his wife Mary, sister of William Palmer. Henry Arrow was employed in the Nizam's civil administration.

<sup>3</sup> Jawahir Singh, brother of Rani Jindan, mother of the young Maharaja, had been murdered in September.

<sup>4</sup> Puttans, i.e. Pathans or Rohillas. General Fraser made constant endeavours to have them removed from Hyderabad, but in vain.



## L E T T E R 43

[Taylor, still harping on the possibility of his being moved from Shorapur, states that he has not written anything in his letters to *The Times* against the Governor-General, Sir Henry Hardinge. His position as the correspondent of *The Times*, which is curious to present-day ideas, does not seem to have been regarded as open to objection.]

A good deal of the letter, not here reproduced, is about the Ceylon estate. Taylor had joined two officers at Lingsugur in the purchase of a further portion of land.]

*Camp at Boknal, 23rd Nov. 1845*

I cannot thank you sufficiently for all your exertions on my behalf. Preceding letters will have informed you so fully of the steps which the G.G. took in regard to the Govt. of this place that no further allusion is necessary just now to them. Pray convey to Mr. Mill my very cordial thanks for his good opinion, which having attained, I shall do all in my power to maintain uninjured. His dispatch it was, I am convinced, which turned the tide in my favour, and from the tenor of events since I do not see that I have to fear removal. If the Governor General is determined, however, to have a civilian here, why, it is his pleasure and I have only to submit at once, which I should do without seeking for any explanation from him, or writing a single letter to anybody. I conclude from your letters that an answer to his dispatch has not been forwarded to India as yet and that I have still some months to remain in suspense, but of this I can assure you that, if I have to move, I will not stay long in India. If I am removed I conclude Govt. would direct the purchase of my house for their agent or Resident, or would allow

me to sell it, which I could do to the State without difficulty.

I am very glad to hear that the Gov. Genl. and the Home Authorities coincide with me regarding the Nuzzerana<sup>1</sup> matter. Though I have written from time to time on the subject, yet I have never received any definite or encouraging answer. Fraser may have recd. definite instructions of which he may have not thought it expedient to let me into the secret, and though a little has oozed out through Malcolm and others, and some months ago he wrote that the point was on the *tapis* and nigh settlement, yet I have heard nothing since. Now that the Gossayn's accounts have gone in, something must be done. If the Sup<sup>e</sup>. Govt. did its duty to the full extent, it would make the Nizam's refund ten lakhs to Shorapoor, but this may not be expedient. Perhaps all we can look for is a return of the money paid since Gresley's settlement, which is 1,66,000 Rs. and a release of the balance apparently due, 4,10,000. I should be content with this, though not a full measure of justice; that perhaps is hardly to be expected. There are some nasty intrigues going on at Shorapoor which will bring some of the people into well-deserved trouble. The Shorapoor people are the most painstaking to do themselves a mischief of any I know and, though for the last 30 years they have never been so well off, their country never so quiet as it is at present, yet they can't be quiet. Two months ago a paper was brought up to me, being a request on the part of a person who has some authority among the Duftardars and other authorities, to be made minister, and that for his support a force was to be sent of some 800 men, Arabs and Rohillas. The paper

was addressed to no one, but it was in the maker of the request's own hand writing and was to have been delivered to a confidential servant of the Nizam, Raja Bolmokund, who just now has great influence with him. Fraser first doubted the copies I sent, but could not get over the original. I pressed the punishment of the person and others concerned with him, at least their temporary removal from Shorapoor; however he did not think it necessary and I said no more. Two days ago I hear from Malcolm that a force of 500 Arabs and Rohillas had been secretly prepared in the city to come to Shorapoor. The intelligence received by Fraser produced a decisive note to the Nizam's Govt. which will at any rate have the effect of stopping the march of the Arabs, at least I hope so, but if they do march F. has said the consequences will be on their own heads and not on the Govt., and I have no doubt he will order out troops to stop them. I have sent some guards to watch the fords, and some people for intelligence to the N.E. towards Hyderabad. I have not since heard from Malcolm, but expect to hear every day either that they could not stop the Arabs and have ordered out troops, or that, the intrigue having been detected, the parties engaged in it have dropped it. The person at the bottom of it is the Ranee, and one of her paramours is very busy also. A good many arrests would be necessary to clear Shorapoor of creatures like these, and if I can get the Resident's blood up to direct these, I should be quiet. All the persons intriguing are in the enjoyment of full hereditary office, pay, etc., but because they cannot cheat, as heretofore, wholesale, these intrigues are set on foot. The Ranee is a shameless devil, and these

people of hers will one day or other get her into such a mess, that she will be sent off to Benares or some other holy place, where she can amuse herself with fat Brahmins *ad lib*. These Ranees are everywhere the same, Lahore, Gwalior, Kolapoor, Indore, not a shade of difference except what results from differences in shamelessness.

I do not think my writing to Delane has had anything to do with the proposed alteration in Shorapoor. I have never written anything against the G.G.; on the contrary have upheld him and brought forward acts for the furtherance of education etc. I have, though it seems a large word for me to write, supported him and will continue to do so. No! What occurred arose out of a belief common at the Council that such a place could *only* be managed by a civilian, and H.E., who was new, saw there had been much mismanagement; he could not see his way through it, thought perhaps a new active, fresh from the Foreign Office, civilian would clear up all doubts in a twinkling, and that being directly under himself he could manage as he pleased. He did not foresee the difficulties with the Nizam's Gov.

I have had a low fever for a week which came on with an attack of rheumatism, but I am quite well again except that I am weak, very. The weather has become settled and cool now, and I trust I shall have no more of the fever which was distressing and owing to the rheumatism attended with much pain.

P.S. I can't write to D. this mail. I have had only today to write and this to you and one to my father has done me up. There is no news in particular, no signs of a Punjab war nor of any present new row there. The

Ranee<sup>2</sup> holds her own. A conspiracy has been discovered at Gwalior which, if true, ought to take the Ranee out of that place for good. Hyderabad is quiet but the finances are in sore disorder and the Nizam begins, they say, to look to the Resident for pecuniary help.

<sup>1</sup> Nazarana: i.e. the payment to the Nizam personally of a sum on acknowledgement of a new chief. Gosain: i.e. one of the so-called holy men who had lent money. Daftardars: persons connected with the office administration.

<sup>2</sup> The Ranee: i.e. Ranee Jindan in the Punjab.

## LETTER 44

[This letter, dated 7 December 1845 from Camp Suger, is so entirely taken up with enthusiastic anticipations of the future of the Ceylon estate that it is not necessary to reproduce any portion of it. He mentions that he is weak after much fever, and his illness had interfered with the regularity of his letters to *The Times*.]

## LETTER 45

[Taylor is naturally gratified by a dispatch from the Court of Directors satisfactory to him, though it alluded to an admission by him that he had been misled by the Ranee.

A matter of more personal interest is the reference to Reeve's idea of marrying the sister of his deceased wife. He later abandoned the thought of so daring a step.

It is curious at the present day to find *The Times* correspondent in India, writing on 24 December, unaware that the Sikh army had crossed the Sutlej on the 11th, and had thus begun the first Punjab war. By the date of Taylor's letter the initial British victory at Mudki had been won on the 18th, and the more doubtful battle of Ferozshahr had been fought on the 21st and 22nd.

The postscript refers to a great effort by Thomas Waghorn. A mail which had reached Suez on 19 October was brought from Egypt by a special steamer to Divino, 12 miles from Trieste, and, carried by a courier across Europe, reached London on 31 October, thus making an unprecedentedly quick journey.]

*Camp at Suggur 24th Dec. 1845*

It is almost too hurried a proceeding to sit down at once and reply to a letter which has only the moment before reached me, but I was just about writing to you, having despaired of receiving the mail, when it arrived with yours of the 1st November. My post must go off in an hour or so, and I will write what I can now as there is no prospect of immediate interruptions. I am infinitely obliged to the Court for its word of approval of my poor services here, and I cannot but think that what has been written from thence will have more weight than what emanates from the India Board relative to transactions now three years old, and which the current of events has so completely changed the character of. I cannot call to mind in what instance I acknowledged that I was deceived by the Ranee, without a reference to old correspondence which I have not by me, but it strikes me that it could have been on no very material point as I was enabled to put her aside entirely, nor has she been able to raise her head except to give temporary local annoyance to Pid Naik and myself in trifling matters which were quite unnecessary to report. If I had been deceived, I have no doubt I acknowledged it, for I believe it not only the best but most necessary policy rather to acknowledge an error freely than to leave it to Govt. to find it out and rap one's knuckles for it. I had no local knowledge whatever of the Ranee or of the Shorapoor people when I began these duties, and was bundled off from Hyderabad with a packet of disconnected official letters in my hand, and a few general instructions, verbal, from Fraser to do what I could to stop a row which appeared imminent and

which he had no troops to put down, if it arose. I did what I could and, if in any matter of negotiation I believed the Ranee's lies, I found them out afterwards and reported I had done so, surely no great harm was done. I verily believe no Political Agent in India could say that at one time or other he had not been deceived by false professions, and it requires an apprenticeship to the work to entertain a never ceasing suspicion of everything that is said or written, apparently in the fairest spirit and most plausible humility. I don't know whether I told you last mail that the Governor General had sent an offl. to Fraser in answer to a revenue report of mine, expressing that I had conducted the affairs of the past year with 'zeal and judgement', and, as the G.G. is known to be very chary of his expressions of satisfaction, I cannot, I hope, be far wrong in thinking that he has no present wish to disturb me and, as he is left to his own discretion in regard to retaining my services, that he will retain them. If however he says 'go', I must make my bow, but I will not think it can come to this. To say the truth, if the Nizam's country was placed under superintendence I should prefer a district there to Shorapoor which is a nest of vice and intrigue which cannot be equalled elsewhere. It is still said that districts will be demanded from the Nizam in payment of the Contingent. There is nothing certain however, nor even a probability further than that Fraser has made heavy advances in payment of the Contingent and, I was told by a native banker of Shorapoor a day or two ago, continues to do so. How can this go on when it is notorious that the credit of the Nizam's Govt. gets worse and worse every day? I wish the Home

Govt. would make up their minds on the subject for in a short time more the entanglements between the revenue collectors and the people, and the collectors and the Govt., and the Govt. and the Sahookars, will be next to impossible to set right and how long can the country bear the incessant forestalments of revenues? A Nizam's Talookdar who has 16 lakhs of collections, his districts border on Shorapoor, has collected the whole of his revenue for the current revenue year, though no crops are ripe and the harvest will not be in for 3 months yet, and has even begun instalments of next year's revenue. I have collected about  $1/4^{\text{th}}$  of mine, and in the Coy's country not a rupee is paid or even due yet. How the Ryots in the district I speak of raise money I don't know, but the fruit of the system is apparent in 900 of the best farmers and zemindars having fled into the Bellary<sup>1</sup> district from whence they were sent up to the General who has referred them to the Nizam's Govt. and there they will remain; in a greater or less degree it is everywhere the same.

The second part of your letter has given me lively concern, for though I perfectly coincide in your opinion as to the useless objections which exist in England on the subject, and the necessity of annulling the Act regarding it, still I cannot but foresee infinite pain and anxiety to you both in which I shall and do sympathise most sincerely. Who could be a mother to your child like the mother's own sister? Certainly no stranger; however she might love *you*, her own offspring would, it is a natural consequence, be more to her than yours by another. The same *στοργή* could not exist or find place in her mind as in that of a sister's. I have always thought the pro-



hibition unnatural and absurd ; there is no consanguinity, strictly speaking, existing. A husband and a wife's sister are but connections by marriage and to my mind marrying a cousin, who is a blood relation, is more objectionable than a deceased wife's sister. My dear Henry, I do from my heart feel for you and yours in this matter and I can only say, hope and be patient. If you can carry the Bill of abolition through parliament, you will win a glorious and humane victory, and may God bless you in the execution. The reverse is too painful to look at steadily, but, if you both have knit your minds to bear it, you will do so. You must tell me what you do in the matter, and I need hardly add that the confidence you have reposed in me, shall never be broken to mortal. I have answered quite hurriedly but were I to think a month over the matter or a year, my opinion, which existed long ago, could never change.

I have written a longer letter than usual to Delane and he may cut as much of it out as he pleases. I have given all the Punjab news and said a good deal about Dekhan railways, a railway paper having taken up and commented on what I had previously written. I do hope the G.G. will settle this never ending matter of the Punjab ; they bully and bully and are apparently marching to the Sutlej, 60,000 strong ; well, we are big enough and strong enough to wait for the first blow, and, if the Sikhs get to the river, some restless fiery spirit will come and fire at us or shake his fist in our faces, or do something that can't be borne, and then we go to work in earnest. I hope the G.G. won't delay till Feby ; the heat is fearful I hear in March April and May, and forage is scarce, and I hope

we shall have no nonsense of a subsidiary force and a Resident. They are the devil in a country; absolute non-interference is infinitely preferable in my eyes, but you know my opinions so well on the subject that I need not go on. You must write up more European troops for India if we take the Punjab. True, the chances of invasion are diminished by its occupation but Bengal is bare of troops and Europeans will be wanted to watch the Affghans. We can't hold Sinde and the Punjab without more Europeans and an increase to the Bengal and Bombay armies. I am in a great fidget as to what will turn up on the frontier and a few posts more, even the next, must bring news of great import; perhaps you may hear of war by the mail. I have heard of Amy from Aden and Suez and I am content; a short time more and I shall be free from anxiety. I am well again, thank God, but I was very unwell for a time and grew very weak, now I take my morning's walk and ride as usual.

Waghorn has done a great feat. Is his plan to be continued, and, if so, could I send my T. dispatches by him or through his agents at Bombay? Please ask.

<sup>1</sup> Bellary. The nearest district under the Company's rule in the Madras Presidency.

## LETTER 46

[This letter was written while the British army in the Punjab was not yet ready for a further advance, after the hard-fought battle of Ferozshahr.]

*Camp at Hotinmurroo, on the Bheema. 24th Jany. 1846*

The only apprehension I have, and that is a great deal diminished from what it was, is from the result of the

reference to England ; and as one side there is favourable, and Sir Henry Hardinge has expressed himself satisfied here, and everything goes on quietly at Shorapoor in spite of dirty intrigue now and then, I do not think I am in any danger of being removed, or of Shorapoor affairs meeting with that amount of consideration which would lead to their being placed in a different footing to what they are at present.

And what can Govt. possibly want more than that the country should be kept quiet, the revenue improved, expenses curtailed and debts paid, with such gradual and general improvement in the management of the State as does not materially interfere with old customs and prerogatives ? The principal questions, such as the decision on the Gosayn Sahookar's debt, the remission of the debt due on the old account to the Nizam's Govt., the repayment, by remission of Peshcash, of the money paid by the State after my arrival to the Nizam's Government,—all rest in their own hands. They have had my opinions again and again on all points, and I am not to blame for the delay at any rate. I do not therefore think, as the Governor General has recorded his opinion of my 'zeal and judgement', that he will now turn me out.

Mr. Palmer wrote to me a few days ago that Sutherland,<sup>1</sup> the Military Secretary to the Resident, was, or would be promoted by the casualties at Feroze Sheher, and would have to join. I am not sure that he would have to join even if he were promoted, certainly not as a rule of the service, but, if Field officers are required, and he went, I do not think he would return. Mr. P. says 'you have a good chance of the Secretaryship': I would

gladly take it, for it is some 2500 Rupees a month, but I don't see how I have a good chance of it except from Fraser's favour, and it is possible that he would not have the disposal of the office, that it would be kept open for some Punjab hero. If therefore it should come I should be very thankful, if not, I have nothing to complain of at any rate. I think, if ever the Nizam's country was put under civil management, I should have a good chance of a district in addition to Shorapoor; and this I should dislike except for the additional pay, but I should be obliged to take it. However, unless you in England have determined that the Nizam's Govt. is to go, I don't see any chance of the event here. I conclude the G.G. has told the Resident not to hurry matters, and, when the Punjab affair is over, that all will come to a crisis and he will be better prepared to do what may be necessary.

I wish you would begin harping upon the necessity of clearing out foreign mercenaries<sup>2</sup> from the States of Native Princes. I only assume that we have a right to dictate this, as their presence may lead to broils and misunderstandings with the States who employ them. There are Arabs, Sikhs and Puttans at Hyderabad who are undisguisedly insolent. These should be packed off, and, wherever similar levies exist, the same course should be pursued. It is the more necessary that these should be dealt with firmly and promptly as in times of the profoundest peace we are liable to injury at their hands, and in time of war they form so many nuclei for disaffection. Their places will be well filled by the *indigenous* soldiery whom we cannot employ, but who find a harmless kind of service with native states.

I am much obliged for the money, and you have done quite right in helping Weld. I send him some more by this mail and have told him to ask you if ever he is in trouble, and that you will help him on my account from any money that may be due to me. Will you kindly do this? I wish Weld had come to India when I wanted him to do so; he would at all events never have wanted money. Artists have carried away fortunes from Hyderabad alone by painting trash such as is inconceivable. He would not, however, come and it is too late now. We must help him at home as heretofore.

Outram's book<sup>3</sup> is in my possession. It is a collection of monstrous *facts*, which are now badly put together, but which, if the mere arrangement of his MSS. is ably done in England and he is allowed to publish it, will alter your opinion of Napier's book, opinions, and statements entirely—I am sure of this. It is not Napier's turgid style that I find fault with; it is that the greater part of the so called 'facts' are taradiddles. Let Outram come out (but I fear Govt. won't allow him to publish), and this book and all that belong to it must go down in the opinion of honest men. It is clear that Sir Charles was led by the nose by Ali Morad,<sup>4</sup> and *would* not see *his* aims and their consequences. Ali Morad didn't get all that *he* wanted, and we got Scinde under false political movements, and unwarrantable hostilities for which we suffer retribution in paying a million a year or thereabouts for its occupation, which will never, I suspect, be reduced unless the occupation of the Punjab makes it pay better than it does now.

If you have enough to do on your own hands in fighting



MEADOWS TAYLOR IN 1873

your political and party battles, we have enough with the Punjab. The more I look at the question the more I *don't* see the end of it. It must be taken, that is, we must go to Lahore. We can't stop now, though we shall have to fight one more heavy battle, and besiege the city and Summun Boorj not to mention Govindgarh and other forts. It will be the hardest fought campaign we have had in India, and, when it is over, what then? Has anything been decided in England, before the war was probable, while only possible? Are we to occupy it for good, and in the whole or in part? Are we to take Cashmere? What is thought among your politicals? Here I have not a soul to discuss the subject with, and while I see much for the absolute and permanent occupation I see much against it in expense, size, difficulty of settlement and the like. Still weighing the two, I would, were I the G.G. and free, take it against all chances. There would be a few insurrections, a few intrigues, but a strong hand would put them down, and we should be sure to find a strong party opposed to the military anarchy which has made a hell of the country for the last five years. There has been the most ample provocation for this proceeding. We should want, as we do now, more European troops and you will have to send us some speedily, whether we take the Punjab for good or not.

I have asked you before whether I send my letters properly directed to Richardson at Malta—I hope I do. I can't pretend to cope in rapidity of intelligence with the Bombay correspondents of the papers, but I will do my best, and if my letters can reach London by any more rapid route than Malta and Mr. Richardson, please let

me know it. These victories will have been a great relief to you all, though they have been dearly purchased, and another 100 officers will be *hors de combat*, I daresay, ere the end of the campaign. I suspect it will be a longer affair than was thought; Sir H. G. will get to Lahore this year, and have the hills for the next cool season.

<sup>1</sup> Sutherland, Eric (1798-1846), was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in his regiment, the 27th Bengal Native Infantry, in this month, but he died before he could join it. He had been serving for many years in the Nizam's army, and was a younger brother of John Sutherland, already mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> It is fair to Fraser, who is so often blamed by Taylor, to point out that he constantly endeavoured to get these unruly outsiders removed from Hyderabad, but received no support from the Nizam's Government and very little from the Government of India. It would indeed have been difficult to eject them, not only on account of their numbers (D. A. Malcolm in his article in the *Calcutta Review* puts them at 35,000), but because they were useful to so many influential men. The Arabs still continue at Hyderabad, though no longer a danger to the public peace.

<sup>3</sup> There were a good many advance copies (printed in India) of Outram's book in circulation. It was issued to the public in this year in England after some revision.

<sup>4</sup> Ali Murad was the only Amir (or Mir, as they were locally called) of the Talpur Rulers of Sind to assist the British. This he did to suit his own ambitious purposes, and his appointment by Sir Charles Napier to be Rais or Chief Mir of Upper Sind, with gross injustice to the old Rais Mir Rustam, was one of the main reasons why the Mirs of Middle and Lower Sind found themselves, much against their will, obliged to fight against the British troops.

## LETTER 47

[Taylor writes in ignorance of the victory at Aliwal, won by Sir Harry Smith on 28 January. The criticisms of Sir Hugh Gough's bludgeon method of fighting an action were already strong: they were to be made more fiercely in the second Punjab war.]

Camp Narribole, 8th Feby. 1846

You will see that the Govr. Genl. and the force have lain inactive for a month and I believe this could not have



been avoided. It seems to be the truth that we were, utterly unprepared for war, that there was no adequate magazine formed at Ferozepoor nor in the stations of Umballa or Lodhiana, that we have now to wait till shot, shell, and musket ammunition etc. can be sent up from Delhi, before we can cross the river. Some of the battering train promptly dispatched had reached Camp but the convoys of materiel were yet in the rear. All this may be satisfactory to the wishing-for-peace party but must have been infinitely embarrassing in the present emergency. If we could have followed up the first blow it would have had a great effect, not only on the Sikhs but on India: as it is, the blow we gave exhausted us for the time and we could do nothing after it, not even, it appears, prevent the Sikhs from making a new bridge and establishing a *tête du pont* on our side in which they have 20,000 men and are well protected by batteries of very heavy guns on the other side. Verily these fellows are not to be underrated, and it is just as well we felt their weight at first, so ensuring future caution and the employment of a little science, instead of being led on by the 'Oh it will only be a few hours business—' cry of the many. Ventura and Avitabile<sup>1</sup> may be proud of their pupils, and indeed it is well we have not their ready invention and wily skill to contend against. Any European leader would have dashed with a strong column into the centre of our force as it lay in the field on the night of the 21st,<sup>2</sup> and it is not too much to say that such a dash would have recovered the guns and driven us back. Why does that old man Sir Hugh Gough delight in charging batteries? He is as brave as a lion; so is the Duke, but the Duke won plenty

of victories and yet never charged guns except when he couldn't help himself. He is said to have exclaimed at Maharajpore when the batteries opened fire 'The nearest way out of this is to take the batteries.' So it may be once in a way, but not always.

You will have seen that the dispatches are very meagre; we don't know anything except that the camp was stormed and that we suffered great loss. The G.G. and C. in C. are a little too much in the 'caw me caw thee' principle; why should they belaud each other? Both, however, are gallant men, and have done their *devoir* nobly. Much, very much, is yet to be done, and I take it we shall have several general actions, one on the river, one before Lahore, unless the Sikh force is utterly routed, then some sieges, which, with the guns they have, and the way they know how to serve them, and their evident acquaintance with much of the art of war, will rival some of the Continental ones. It would have been better for us if the Sikhs had begun their operations a month earlier; we have lost the best month in the year, January. February gets hot, March hotter and April very hot. I say nothing about May. I do not think we shall get further than Lahore this year, and it will be quite enough. There is plenty to do between Ferozepore and Lahore though it be only 40 miles or so.

It will be curious to see what the Affghans do: they are not likely to help the Sikhs, but may make a little diversion on their own account against Peshawar and I suppose we should have no objection to them taking it if they could, we retaining Attock as our frontier post, and the Indus as our boundary; we need not go beyond.

I hope there is no truth in the rumour of peace. We don't want it except at Lahore, and it would never do to be bought off either by territory or money. The Sikhs may offer both, and be as impertinent as ever again when it suits them. No, this war is a heavy matter, it is true, but it will come off gloriously and it shall be the last we shall have in India. We have no recourse but to go through with it. I can imagine all your impatience for news and next month you will have plenty. You may even know some more by this bi-monthly, for there is no saying what battles may occur arising out of mere outpost affairs so long as such formidable masses are near each other. If we estimate camp followers of both forces, what a multitude of people must be together!

My affairs are flourishing, and there will be a noble harvest in the district with grain at double the price of last year; this enables me to screw up the assets about 10,000 Rs. in this district alone. It is getting hot, but I am quite well and hearty. Nothing new at Hyderabad; that the Nizam is in trouble is no news.

<sup>1</sup> Jean Baptiste Ventura (1792/3-1858) and Paolo Avitabile (1791-1850), Italian officers in the Sikh army. They had both left the Punjab in 1843.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the night of 21 December at Ferozshahr.

## LETTER 48

[The great victory at Sobraon had been won on 10 February, just a fortnight before Taylor's letter, and the resistance of the Khalsa army immediately collapsed.]

*Camp Jewingee, 24 Feby. 1846*

You will have heard of the victory at Aliwal by the last mail, but the dispatch of Sir Harry Smith, which is

a very capital one by the bye, is now public and gives most satisfactory accounts of the engagement. A gallant one it was, and deserves all the praise which can be lavished on it. See here the effects of a good preconcerted plan of operations and rest to the troops. Every man knew his position, and the work he was expected to do and all hands behaved nobly. It seems to me a happy contrast to the hard fought scramble at Ferozesheher, which though a victory was not decisive, and put the army nearly *hors de combat*; I hope we may have no more such. A day's rest there, and a little manoeuvring to draw the Sikhs out, would not have been declined, and our people would not have suffered as they did. Nothing but the dogged valour of the army saved it from a sharp reverse, which would have been very difficult to mend. However, there is no use in retrospection on this subject. The victory at Aliwal will have crippled the Sikhs sorely as to artillery and ammunition, and we have by this time a good half of the Sikh artillery in our hands, and the best half, I should think, at least of field guns. This is the only arm they can make any real opposition with; the old Avitabile battalions fight creditably, form squares and stand charges of cavalry, but you will see by the dispatch that the Lancers rode through and through them, proving that their discipline is not equal to their pluck, nor can it be. It is well Avitabile and Allard<sup>1</sup> and Court are not at their head now; we should have a protracted and bloody war. As it is, after our army has passed the river, and you may even hear of its having done so by this mail, there will be one or two great battles, and the Governor General will reach Lahore. I cannot imagine

there will be any check or reverse. He is very strong just now, and the diversion to be made by Napier<sup>2</sup> with his 15,000 men will help him materially.

Golabsingh has come down from his hills but has not by the last accounts sent any of his contingent to the aid of the Khalsa, though he brought some of it, more I should think as a personal escort than as aid to the war. He cannot but see that the Governor General is determined on advance, and, if he calculates the effect of it rightly, he will make his own terms or endeavour to do so, but I suspect Sir Henry would rather he joined the Sikhs. Recognition of his independence, and a separate treaty with him would be inconvenient hereafter, and he would be better as an open enemy than as merely a self-interested ally. The same may be said of the Naib<sup>3</sup> of Mooltan, who may or may not oppose Napier. In every respect it is a most interesting and anxious period, and the events of this month will surpass those of December and January. Lahore is but 25 miles from the bank of the river and three marches will take the camp there. It will not go quicker on account of the vast quantity of stores with it, and supplies of all sorts which must be taken. The army may be there today, and as yet the season is very fine and cold even here. There will be no heat to speak of in the Punjab up to the end of April, and by that time I hope that Govindgarh etc. will have fallen. There will be hard work at these forts. If the Sikhs fight so well behind sand bags and gabions they will be very formidable behind stone walls and regular batteries, but we shall see a good account given of them I doubt not. Beside the war there is no news. All India is admirably

quiet, shewing that our power is really felt and respected. There could not be a better proof of this than the dulness everywhere except on the frontier. The Nizam's Govt. goes on as best it can, badly enough, and how it will continue, heaven knows. Fraser pays the Contingent by orders from Govt. of India, and the Nizam has fallen into debt many lakhs. This can hardly continue, for the Governor General is more likely to become a borrower than continue a lender of money. A letter arrived from the G.G. the other day to the Nizam, but its contents have not transpired; possibly it was only in intimation of the victory of Aliwal, but others have it that it was pressing an arrangement for the Contingent, which can only be made by transferring districts equal to the expense, as at Gwalior. You will see the immense augmentation to the army, some 20,000 men enlisted and being formed, and the skeletons of 18 new Regiments for Bengal put together. The Leadenhall gentlemen will wince at this, but there is no help for it. We must have 30,000 men at least in the Punjab, and India has to be cared for also. I rejoiced when I saw the orders regarding the new levies; to have delayed or hesitated about them would have been perilous. In 6 months all these will be ready for service, and while the veteran troops hold Lahore, these will be strong enough to keep North India quiet and perform all duties. Just now it is fearful to look on the literally denuded stations of the Bengal army, Cawnpoor, Meerut and the like with merely a Battalion to look after the houses and Govt. Buildings.

My little kingdom is quite quiet; I am busy with the revenue settlement, and it is satisfactory to find that the

revenue increases everywhere. I shall have 20,000 Rs. more this year than last, and the harvest of these districts is splendid. The Bedurs of the districts ceded to the Nizam are fighting with the Govt. authorities and have the best of it as yet. My people are well in hand and keep aloof, but I don't like insurrection quite so near me, example is often contagious. I have reported the row to Fraser but he won't interfere and perhaps he is right. Let them fight it out, there are faults on both sides. At present they burn and destroy the Govt. villages, not only the Govt. troops, but the Bedurs, as if they were those of an enemy. The Govt. suffers, but no one appears to care a straw! I have sent in my general report and have nothing but good to tell of, which I hope may please the G.G. I have ventured again to bring forward the question of the arrears to the Nizam's Govt. but very tenderly. It is time the question was disposed of one way or another, and if the Directors have written on my side of the matter, as you mentioned, I think they will be relinquished and the money due repaid by the Nizam's Govt. The Gosayn's debt question is not yet settled, but the delay does not lie at my door. I sent in the last accounts required in December.

I have been rather amused by the *Times*<sup>1</sup> discomfiture by the *Herald* in the matter of news from India. It was cleverly managed, but will it be kept up? The French Govt. will hardly run a steamer direct for the mails only.

<sup>1</sup> Allard, Jean François (1785-1839), a French officer, one of the best of the foreign adventurers in the Khalsa army. Claude Auguste Court (1798-1861), the best educated of these officers, was chiefly responsible for the excellence of the Sikh artillery.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Charles Napier's fine army from Sind had only got as far as

Bahawalpur when the news of Soobraon made its further advance unnecessary.

<sup>3</sup> The Naib, or Deputy, at Multan was Mulraj who had succeeded his father Sawanmal in 1844.

<sup>4</sup> The French Government by assisting the *Morning Herald* with a special steamer had enabled that paper to beat *The Times* and the Trieste route by 48 hours, and Taylor alludes to this. The Austrian Government then put a man-of-war at Waghorn's disposal, and, with the assistance of gales in the western Mediterranean, he beat the Marseilles route by a fortnight, the Bombay news of 1 January, giving the news of the Sikhs crossing the Sutlej, being printed in *The Times* of 5 February. The railways in France, however, proved the deciding factor, and, the competition being ruinously expensive, *The Times* and *Morning Herald* came to an arrangement.

## LETTER 49

[Taylor writes in a spirit of relief that must have been felt all over India at the defeat of the Sikh army.]

*Camp Jewingee, March 9th 1846*

You will have seen by the last mail (the steamer was, I suspect, delayed for the dispatches) that another great victory was gained on the 10th Feby. by the Com<sup>d</sup> in Chief and Governor General, and that after a desperate though fortunately not very prolonged defence of the tremendous intrenchment the Sikhs had thrown up as a *tête du pont* they were literally driven into the Sutlej and perished there in thousands by the fire of artillery and the deep waters. So ended the invasion; and our Indian history shews no such terrible battles as these we have fought from Moodkee to the last, Soobraon; but the literally indomitable valour of the troops, no less Native than European, has carried all before it, and we have in our turn invaded the Punjab and ere now, I have no doubt, our troops are at Lahore. Whether we retain the Punjab, or, according to the spirit of the proclamation, set up a



strong Government, one that shall not be subject to the vicissitudes of military anarchy, is yet unknown; that the Governor General desires the latter is very evident, but that the Sikh army now fighting in desperation will listen to the terms which *must* be proposed, will I think be very doubtful. There can be no doubt as to the meaning of the Governor General's proclamation and it is even more decided in Persian than in English. There can be no mistake about the terms intended, the complete security of the British Government, complete indemnification for the war etc. All these will be obtained no doubt. The expenses of the war cannot be over 3 crores, which the Sikhs can very well pay. Perhaps they may be reduced in rank, and obliged to agree to a Peshcash, and the strip of territory between the Beas and the Sutlej will be ceded as demanded. But what is to become of the army? I should think nothing less than a reconstruction of it, as was done in the case of Gwalior, can be decided on. Who would undertake to govern or control it after the late events? Certainly not Golab Singh who seems the only wise man at Lahore. There would be a lull for a while, and again repetitions of murder, riot, and anarchy as before. What other alternative then but a Subsidiary force? Alas, it is a poor one—We may be driven by state necessity to avail ourselves of it, and so to weaken the Punjab, and to perpetrate the miseries of Hyderabad and Oude. If it is desired to make the Punjab our barrier to the North West, a Subsidiary force, and a consequently weak, careless and supine Government which is the result of it, will not ensure it. Embarrassing as the Punjab question always appeared, it never appeared more so than

at present, when we as conquerors can dictate our own terms, and we seem but to have the alternative of occupation, or of remodelling the Sikh army. I have never thought of the invasion of the Punjab but as with a view of ultimate annexation. I felt it would only be invaded upon a clear *casus belli*. Now it is invaded, there seems hesitation and with good ground, as to its annexation, the difficulties rise in strong relief, and how they will be overcome it is hard to say. I hope not by a Subsidiary treaty but I fear that such will be the case; that is, if the Sikhs do not in desperation fight on, and joined by the Sirdars of the country still make head against us. If there is a Subsidiary force it will be 30,000 men at least of which 10,000 would be Europeans. Such a force could alone hold the Punjab against the Sikhs who would, whether against a Govt. of their own or ours, make several desperate efforts to regain power and an army, and even the formation of this force will be a subject of considerable anxiety to the Governor General. A Subsidiary force is better than a Sikh army upon any terms, and I cannot imagine any line of policy which would lead to the latter. Meanwhile the proclamation has a tone of moderation about it which at all events will acquit Sir Henry in the eyes of the world of all lust of territorial aggrandizement, and it comes from him very magnanimously in the hour of victory; no one can doubt or can have doubted his pacific intentions, and it is evident that only in sheer helplessness will he have anything to do with the Punjab as an acquisition. It is too soon to speculate upon the probable events of this and the next months, but they will be watched with vast interest. It

is hard that any *home* embarrassment should be felt here, and should dog the Punjab proceedings, and prevent the Governor General from taking full advantage of his position. Such appears to be thought the case and, if it be so, he has no alternative than to make the best arrangement he can. I would fain see the Punjab snake killed not scotched—I have written what I could to Delane, but it is too momentous a question for my little drum to be heard amidst the din of the invasion and its consequences.

I mentioned to you that Sutherland might be summoned to his Regiment. Poor fellow he has been summoned to a higher ordeal than the field of battle; he is dead. He fell ill of dysentery about the middle of the month after living too gaily, neglected himself, and, when he spoke to his medical man, was beyond hope, ulceration of his intestines having begun. I have no chance of the place, a Capt. Fitzgerald<sup>1</sup> who commands the Nizam's Arty. at Hyderabad has been appointed to act, and will perhaps succeed unless the G.G. should appoint one of his heroes to it, which he may. The appt. is one of mere management of accounts and details and would be a famous one for one of his staff officers. I have not made any application as it was not even hinted, that I knew of, that I had a chance. If I had been on the spot I wd. have asked but there is seldom or ever use in applying from a distance; one merely runs a good chance of being snubbed in the reply.

<sup>1</sup> Fitzgerald, George Fleetwood Charles (1808-88), later Colonel, Bengal Artillery. He was from 1831 to 1853 with the Nizam's army. In 1850 he married a niece of General Fraser.

## LETTER 50

[Taylor's view of the Punjab settlement was a fair one. The outbreak of the second war may have proved it to be mistaken, but there was much to be said for moderation at the time. The alienation of Kashmir for an insignificant money payment was certainly a mistake, but here again the Governor-General, with a fear of further commitments, erred in the cause of moderation.

Reeve did not marry again till 1851, when he did not wed the lady whom Taylor seems to have selected for him.]

*Shahpur, 24th March 1846*

I have moved my camp nearer Shorapoor as the little Raja was very ill, and it did not do to be far away from the capital in case of accidents. He is better, however, and I go in to-day to see him and meet Capt. Adam<sup>1</sup> and his daughter who are coming from Lingsoogoor en route to Hyderabad. After they are gone I shall return, for I have yet much to do in the districts. I have fortunately discovered a capital grove of mangoe trees which cover half an acre of ground, and as their foliage meets everywhere overhead there is ample room for my tents and people, and absolute protection from the sun.

I must say that your letter has relieved me in a great measure from great anxiety about you. I wrote to you what I thought of your marriage with your poor wife's sister and my opinions are the same as then—but so long as such connections and attachment are impracticable by the existing law, and expose both parties to great misery in what seems a fruitless expectation of its reversal, they are to be deplored, and a relief from them desired. I most sincerely hope then that your break with the Richardsons on this head is for good, and heartily

desire that I may hear from you ere long that Mary Moberly is yours.

You will see that the G.G. has made a peace with the Sikhs. He will be blamed perhaps for over moderation, when the Punjab lay at his feet. There are to my mind, as I wrote to you, but one of two alternatives; either to take the country entirely, or to set it up again as an independent Government. In the former there was a vast restless mass of discontented people to deal with, and of semi-independent chiefs for whom employment would have been next to impossible and with whom it would have been very difficult to deal. We should have been in perpetual hot water for many years. We have again left the Sikhs to themselves, set up a Govt., authorized a limited army, and taken away the best part of the only arm which has done us very serious mischief, the Artillery. I conclude the employment of foreigners will be prohibited, and that those who have so materially helped the Sikhs in this war will be discharged. The army therefore will be no subject of dread in future, and Khalsajee<sup>2</sup> has been so severely thrashed, that though he may bluster, he will contrive to eat his leek at Lahore without troubling us to oblige him to do so at the point of the bayonet. We have got a very fair share of the Punjab though I wish we had taken Kashmeer also. I presume its great distance alone prevented the G.G. from demanding it, and we have, or are to have, a million and a half of money, which is to my perception one half too little, but perhaps the stories of Runjeet Singh's treasures in Govindgarh are but stories and no more was to be had.

What hand Golab Singh will make of his ministry it is hard to say. Unless he looks out very sharp, the Ranee will have him murdered, and set up Lall Singh her beloved. The Sikh soldiery will be hard to deal with, and, without his hill-men can control them, there will be a bloody row after the G.G. turns his back. Considering the elements of the Punjab I see no strong ground to hope that there will be peace and quiet. Our very close proximity to Lahore by the new frontier *may* keep all quiet, but it is manifestly impossible to speculate on the result.

I applied for the Mily. Secty.-ship after all, at Wm. Palmer's desire. Fraser writes very civilly that no person could be better qualified for the place than myself, and few equal to me, but that he has left the disposal of it to the Governor General and informs me that if he is asked, which he does not expect, to fill up the vacancy, his promise and support are pre-engaged. The G.G. may give the post to one of his own staff as it by no means belongs to this service. If Fraser is told to appoint an officer, Fitzgerald who is now acting will be the man. Fraser says I may apply direct if I wish it, but this would be bad taste, perhaps, in the first place and certainly useless in the second.

I am, and have been, busy with an article on Outram's book. When it, the work, is to be published I know not but I believe in May. It is a sad revelation; exculpating Lord Ellenborough in a great measure, for Napier kept him quite in the dark as to the real merits of the case, and proving the *General's* book a tissue of really audacious falsehoods. You will read and judge for yourself in time. I wish I could get this article into the *Quarterly*.

It would help Outram's cause much, which after all is not so much personal as exciting compassion for those unhappy Ameers. We never did so bold and bad a deed in India before as taking Sind and if we could get rid of it on any decent pretext it would be a mercy. Sir Charles, however, has netted £70,000<sup>1</sup> by it and has £10,000 a year as Governor; he has feathered his nest. I shall send the article home by next mail I hope. Can you do anything with Murray about it for me? Perhaps I am too ambitious, but Outram asked me to write and I have done my possible, which may be very little after all.

I conclude Hardinge will be made an Earl, and Gough a Baron. Well they deserve it, but the latter I suspect would have made a poor hand of the matter without Sir Henry. He is a gallant soul; you could have sent no other such man for this crisis.

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Adam, see Letter 11, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> Khalsajee: the term by which the Sikhs described themselves as an organized body.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to Sir C. Napier's share of the prize money for Sind. Taylor's article on Outram's book does not seem to have been published.

## LETTERS 51 AND 52

[When considering the criticisms of Taylor and others on the methods of the first Punjab war and the terms of the treaty, it must be remembered that they failed to allow for, and were probably not fully aware of, the difficulties of the position. In particular the casualties among the European regiments and the European officers of the Indian units had been severe, and the danger to this essential portion of the army from an extension of the campaign into the hot weather was great. The terms of the treaty were undoubtedly mild, and obviously made a renewal of the war possible. The further chance, however, given to the Sikhs of re-

maining under their own Government at least cleared the British case of any possible imputation of acting except under compulsion.

Outram's book, after it had been roughly set up in Bombay, and corrected and revised by Taylor and others, had been sent home for publication. It must be remembered that Taylor was now a heated partisan in a controversy that was furiously raging in the Press of India. Sir Charles Napier's policy was very open to attack, and his brother's account of it equally so. But they were as convinced of the justice of their case as Outram was of his: and Taylor's language about both was too unbridled.]

#### LETTER 51

*Shorapoor, April 8th 1846*

I cannot hope that my news of the final settlement of the Lahore matter by treaty will be in good time, but I have written what I could about them. I suspect they will surprise most people, and I daresay that Sir Henry will be rated roundly for not taking the Punjab entirely when it could not pay the money demanded, or for listening to the proposal for the cession of Cashmeer and the other hill territory, or for selling this territory to Golab Singh when he might have retained it. Still I think that any one who will take the trouble to examine the question in reference to his position and the position of Golab Singh and Lall Singh in the Punjab, will admit that the two latter could not have remained at Lahore without cutting each other's throats, and that we would have been drawn into perpetual hot water on their accounts. He has separated them therefore for ever, and thus reduced the animosity of party spirit for ever. Those who have been attached to the Dogra family will find Lahore too hot for them, and will be employed by Golab Singh, and the Khalsas will have it all to themselves at Lahore. I



think you will agree with me that Sir Henry has been too soft with Golab Singh, that he ought to have made him pay more heavily for his independence, if he paid at all, and that he ought to have been required to pay a subsidy in money yearly in token of our supremacy instead of the 12 Cashmèer goats and the 8 pair of shawls. All that I feel disposed to quarrel with the G.G. for is that he has entailed on himself and his Govt. a continuance of trouble with Lahore by his engagement to give advice and direction in their squabbles. He cannot give advice without insisting it shall be obeyed, and, as it may not be obeyed, we shall have no end of correspondence and consequent irritation till some *casus belli* arises and puts an end to the State and the advice together. He had far better have left them alone altogether. There is a Hindu proverb that no one can put his fingers into an ants' nest and not expect to be bitten, and being bitten is generally the result of this most unsatisfactory kind of proceeding. We give advice which is not attended to, and this very not attending to it makes these native States so absurdly consequential and braggart that it comes to a row in the end in which they are smashed. Enough advice has been given to the Nizam's Govt. to sink it for good and all if its evasions had been noticed, and by what miracle it has as yet escaped no one can make out. I suppose its time will come one of these days when all the old matters will be raked up. But this would not do with Lahore at all. I suppose that the G.G. has temporized with the Lahore case, dreading the sudden extension of territory, its cares, losses and expenses, with an over-advanced season and a not over-flourishing

exchequer, and that is what will prove his ground of defence if he is found fault with. They must have been very heavy and anxious considerations and in the present case will have their full weight in England as they have in this country. He could not smash the Punjab, as Dhuleep Singh as it were threw himself, or was thrown, upon his mercy, and Natives have a way of doing this that is very hard to resist by any one whose heart is not as iron as Sir Charles Napier's. I can imagine the Governor General's position exactly, and though many may criticise, there are few who would not I think have done the very same thing. I dare say he clearly foresees the end, and it may even be soon. Till it comes he has his troops close at hand, and his resources unimpaired, nay, refreshed, and, if it must be, the Punjab on the next occasion will fall without a blow, or a thrust, after one general engagement.

I have sent John Edward by this mail nearly the whole of the article on *Sinde matters*, and have been very careful as to facts and dates; indeed it has cost me some heavy labour, and that too in the hottest of hot weather. Read it I pray of you, and, if it be fit for the public, and if you and John can get it a berth, I shall be much beholden to you. If Napier's book was true it wd. be a capital book, but it is so obstinately, perversely, and deliberately false in most parts, that to me, even in comparison with the Blue Books from whence it was written, it appears most contemptible. If any subaltern had written it he would have been cashiered, *must* have been, by any Court Martial that tried him, but he is a Governor and I suppose above the rules which are supposed to guide

other people. I have come in for good and live behind wet tatties by which means I have a temperature of 80. Without them it would be near 100 as it was in tents. My little Raja is better but he has been like to die and is still very weak.

## LETTER 52

*Shorapoor, 25th April 1846*

Long before this reaches you, you will have been set at rest upon the Punjab question, and truly after the din we have had since December, we seem to be in a marvellous state of dulness, very suitable to the hot weather, when it is almost too hot to think of such matters, or to know that they were going on. What you write in your letter of 2nd March is quite right, or rather right so far as I can see in this much, that Gough and Hardinge were wrong, very wrong, in marching their men without food and water all day and attacking those tremendous batteries in the afternoon, when it must have been evident to any one that the contest could not be over till night. If there had been any reverse the Army would have fared miserably during the night, and I question whether active operations could have been resumed next day, or even for many days afterwards. I put the moral effect of any check out of the question. Remembering all your cautions, I wrote as cautiously as I could upon this point, yet did not overlook it. It was a fearful hazard, and nothing but the bulldog courage of the troops, Native and European, I can find no distinction between them, brought us off victorious. I am well prepared to hear vast abuse of Sir Henry and Sir Hugh

for lying inactive for a month before the entrenchment of Soobraon, but they did perfectly right here. They dared not have risked a second battle with the means at their disposal and when they made the attack it proved a *coup de grâce* to the Sikh army. Smith's battle of Aliwal was a brilliant thing, well devised and well carried out. Soobraon another bull-dog affair, which will perhaps be commented upon in this wise, that a combined movement to cross the river ought to have been made sharp after Aliwal. Smith could have crossed the river next day, and Gough could also have thrown his Pontoon bridge across the river at a point below Soobraon, and moved from the left, while Smith moved from the right. I don't know, however, that we should have saved more men. If the Sikhs had been threatened on both flanks they would have retired to Lahore or Kussore, and we should have had a bloody affair there, depend upon it. I am curious to know what will be said on the subject and very content, I assure you, to see matters as they are. The carnage has been dreadful certainly; but I question whether any manœuvring would have drawn Lall Singh<sup>1</sup> and Tej Singh into the field. They had enough at Mood-kee to prove that their men could not stand in the field, and neither was tactician enough to have manœuvred their huge bodies in the field with effect; therefore they stuck to their guns and entrenchments. The Soobraon matter lost them their guns, destroyed the morale of their army, and rendered the war short and decisive; nor can I but think that Hardinge weighed all this with every minuteness beforehand. Whether he did or not, it is clear he had not the means of attacking Soobraon

one day before he did, and both he and Gough seem to have been of one mind as to the necessity of the delay. About these victories what nonsense is this that Gough has put forth, that only the men *under fire* are to receive medals<sup>2</sup>. Was it the fault of the camp guards told off according to the Regimental Rosters, that they are not in the thick of the fight? and did not they form the actual base of the army's operations? Gough ought to be ashamed of himself on this point and I hope you will attack him tooth and nail upon it; he deserves no mercy. I shall be very anxious to hear what you will say as to the Treaties. I have already said all I can on the subject, and my opinions undergo no change. We have only now to watch events and I am far from thinking that we have done with the Punjab. The most I think that can be said is that Hardinge did not do all he ought, but the best he could under the circumstances of the case. I shall be glad, however, to find myself in the wrong. As to recalling him it is, as you say, sheer nonsense. You could not have a better man at the head of affairs and I especially admire his sound political morality in the beginning and end of this question. If Napier and Lord E. had had the management of it we should have had a dirty hole-and-corner business like that of Sinde, and Napier would have plundered Lahore, even though it had submitted without firing a shot.

I have sent John Edward the remaining part of the article on Outram's book by this mail. *Do* take the subject up. The *Times* is not the *Times* if it doesn't. It could not thunder in a more righteous cause. How Ellenborough could swallow all he was crammed with

passes my conception. How he could ever have overlooked the wretched policy to which he was committed by Sir Charles, who<sup>1</sup> does not appear to me to have a spark of common honesty about him, I don't know. Read what Outram says, and judge for yourself; to my mind, no previous passage of Indian History, and there are some bad enough, is at all to be equalled by it. Read about the treaties, how Napier behaved to Lord E., to the Ameers and to Outram, how afterwards about the attack on the Residency, he concealed letters, falsified dates, etc., and how in the end he treated his prisoners, and then say if he, or his brother who wrote such a history, are fit to wear Her Majesty's uniform. They are great people and have a great name, but in truth appear to me most despicable. I assure you, though as you know from the first I have suspected the Sinde matter, I had no idea, not the most remote conception, that it was by a hundredth part what it is, and my only point of admiration, barring the bare fights, is, the profound *impudence* with which the thing has been made by the Napiers and Ellenborough to appear not only justifiable but imperative, and righteous! Outram's book will be out in May, and I hope you or Delane, or both as I have begged, may be furnished with a copy. As to the article, I may perhaps hardly hope that it will be accepted; still I hope. I have been very careful with it as to facts, dates, and to the best of my ability considerations also. If anyone takes it, it would pay my children's cost for the year which is something in hard times, but a secondary consideration to what I conceive an exposition of this dark matter.

I have had no Hyderabad news for some time, and I can hear of no changes or amendment in the Government. It is a miserable one in every respect, and, if the total incapacity of a Government was ever a just cause for setting it aside, this is one which requires immediate measures of interference. Fraser can do nothing. His attempts have proved abortive and have I suspect done more harm than good. Does the Home Government intend to direct any measures? We have no active tyranny, but that utter neglect which amounts to worse.

Let me know by all means and soon which way I am to send my offl. letters. I saw a flourish in the papers the other day that the morning papers had increased their correspondents salaries, and at Bombay and Calcutta they got £200 or £300 a year! I should not grumble to be classed among them, I assure you.

<sup>1</sup> Lal Singh was the Vazir or Minister of the nominal Sikh Government, and Tej Singh the Commander-in-Chief of the Sikh army.

<sup>2</sup> The principle which Gough is said by Taylor to have laid down, that only those were entitled to a medal or clasp for a particular battle who had been under fire, was that followed in the grant of the Peninsular and some subsequent medals.

## LETTERS 53, 54, AND 55

[Taylor now reverts to local affairs. The condition of the Nizam's Government was deteriorating and the pay of the Contingent was so continually in arrears that the Resident had to advance it from the Company's Treasury at a time when the Indian Government was hard pressed for money.]

### LETTER 53

*Shorapoor, 13th May 1846*

I have collected some Hyderabad news for the T—, all I could get for material for a letter. The Government

there is in a state of hard up-ishness not to be described, and I look for some decided measures ere long on the part of our Govt., if not as regards the country and Govt. at large, at least in regard to the payment of the Contingent. The Supreme Govt. cannot go on paying it for ever, and 30 lakhs of Rupees makes a large hole in the Indian Exchequer, and is wanted for many more useful purposes than paying the Contingent. There is literally no one in authority at Hyderabad except the Nizam. We have a right to demand that *some* Minister shall be appointed, but the Nizam won't have Suraj-ud daula<sup>1</sup> at any price, as he mistrusts his connection with Fraser and Malcolm, and perhaps justly, nor is he respectable, and I am afraid Fraser will hear of no other man. At least the Nizam supposes so, which amounts to the same thing in the end. Fraser does nothing, because he can do nothing, and is at Bolarum, 12 miles from the Residency, as well, I dare say, to be out of the way as to take care of his wife who is seriously ill.

I see the Governor General has virtually rescinded Gough's stupid order about the medals. All who were present in camps etc. are to have them. It is a hardship that the Bombay and Sind troops who were pushed up to Bahawalpur are not to have a share of the Batta; as the Bengal troops got a year, these men might have 6 months, I think, with fairness.

Sutherland's appointment is filled up. It has not been given locally, but a Capt. Johnstone<sup>2</sup> of the Bengal Army, I suspect the man who was Paymaster or Commissariat officer at Cabool, has been appointed. This is in fact what Fraser expected, as he wrote to me in reply



to my application. If districts are transferred to the Resident's charge for payment of the Contingent, I may possibly get a lift, and this is the only advance I can hope for.

A good while ago the Court of Directors wrote about the establishment of an Adalut<sup>3</sup> here, civil and criminal, and Fraser gave me a nudge on the subject, asking for a report. This I have sent in pointing out the many difficulties, and little advantage, to be gained by it. Punchayets do very well in civil cases, and in criminal ones all I could suggest was that I should try the culprit and send the proceedings for confirmation. There would be more trouble protecting an Adalut among these Bedurs than it would be worth, and the people have a horror of Company's Adaluts with all their forms and litigations. The community is very small, and not litigious by any means, but find them means for litigation, and I conclude they would soon emulate their neighbours. The Bedur association must be broken up before a regular criminal Adalut could be established, or Govt. must be prepared with force to carry into execution the first disputed decree. The establishment of an Adalut would be considered a prelude to taking possession of the territory altogether, for the people would not understand any other reason for its establishment. I am, however, ready to do my possible in the matter, which, yes or no, must be left to wiser heads than mine to determine. You can mention this to Mill or not, as you please, if you see him.

The *Times* is very fair about the battles. The two first cannot be defended. The Indian (Calcutta) papers call Gough's tactics the Tipperary 'could stayle' style and,

without you wish to hear more of it, you had better give him his Peerage and Pension, if he is worth either, and have done with him. If Lall Singh had not been a traitor to his own people, we might have been sorely pushed in this war. It is more clear than ever that it was made only to get rid of the Army.

<sup>1</sup> Suraj ud Daula, afterwards Suraj-ul-Mulk, had been appointed by the Nizam as Vakil, or Agent, in 1843 on Chandu Lal's retirement, but the Nizam was unwilling to give him powers as Dewan or Minister: he only did so in November 1846 under pressure from the Resident. Taylor's statements about his character are similar to those expressed by William Palmer so late as 1866 in a letter to Gresley. He seems, however, to have done his best to introduce reforms in the administration, and he must be given credit for the training of his nephew, the great Minister, Sir Salar Jung.

<sup>2</sup> Major, later Lt.-Col., George Johnston (1805-81), of the Bengal army. He remained as military secretary at the Residency till his retirement in 1853.

<sup>3</sup> Taylor's objection to the establishment of an Adalat or regular legal court may seem surprising to those unacquainted with the result of similar institutions elsewhere in India. Such formal courts, with their encouragement of lawyers and therefore of litigiousness, and the opportunity they gave to moneylenders to obtain decrees against land holders and cultivators, had proved disastrous in many parts of British India and were unsuitable for a backward population living in simple conditions. Taylor's preference for local Panchayets was shared by the district officers all over India. Efforts have been made in recent years to re-establish such Panchayets: but their day has probably departed for ever.

#### LETTER 54

*Shorapoor, June 11th 1846*

I am delighted to see from the extracts from the *Times* what an excellent and moderate position it has taken in regard to the Punjab matter and Lord Hardinge's proceedings. I was almost afraid that it would have run into the acquisition line of policy but you are evidently too steady to be dazzled, and after all it is not all gold

that glitters. We should have been in a mess as to expense by this time if the army had kept the field, which it must have done if the occupation of the country had been decided upon, and there would not have been much revenue forthcoming from the Sikh managers, who would either have bolted or given no end of false accounts. I daresay also, as in most native States, the revenues have been anticipated. No, we are well out of the mess; not that I think the country will be quiet after we go. Our presence only I suspect keeps the Ranee, Lall Singh and Tej Singh together; all the rest are nowhere at present, but will drop in one by one, you will see, as occasion offers. All I regretted in the Treaty was that we had not washed our hands of the matter at first—but such a proceeding might have been called heartless, the youth of the Raja and the position of all parties being considered. Perhaps it was wisely done if all interference with actual affairs is to be discontinued, but if there is a chance, and I am afraid there are many, of the policy not being followed up strictly, we have got into a mess which may lead to a subsidiary treaty and all its vexations and embarrassments.

Malcolm was lately fired upon by some Sikhs at Hyderabad who are in a state of mutiny as many other bodies of the Nizam's *own* are. I don't at all know whether it will be taken up. Some natives say that a very angry or, rather, solemn letter has gone from Fraser to the Nizam, but I don't know this for truth so I have not mentioned it. It is said also that the Nizam demanded the persons who fired on Malcolm from the Sikhs, but that they returned an impudent refusal on which he declared them

discharged. This marks the utter weakness of the Govt. It is powerless to apprehend or punish any one who may have a party to back him, and discharging the Sikhs, most of whom may be innocent, is neither here nor there. They cannot be discharged, either, without payment, and as the Nizam owes them 22 months' pay, which must amount to some lakhs of rupees, and is quite unable to pay them, they will remain. Money is scarcer than ever, all the revenues are forestalled and there are no assets which the Sahookars will receive as assignments for advances.

I have made a little change in my little Ministry. The Ranee had corrupted the head man under me and was beginning to make her way into the Treasury, from which he extracted 800 Rupees for her use. I have therefore turned him out under Fraser's permission, and I hope to have got rid of the last stronghold of corruption and intrigue. This man and the Ranee got up a senseless intrigue among the Bedurs and have sowed a good deal of dissension among them. They are so stupid and savage that such proceedings are very objectionable. I hope, however, that the dismissal of my friend, and the fright the Ranee has been in in consequence, will have their due effect. But she is entirely under the dominion of the man she keeps, and there is no use talking to her. She will go a step too far one of these days, and it would be a very good riddance if Government would send her to her paternal halls, which are somewhere in Mysore.

I have paid every one up to the end of the native year, 6th June, and have Rs. 42,000 clear in the Treasury. The Nizam's Govt. tribute, Rs. 40,000, is also cleared off.

There are 20,000 Rs. more to come in, all being collected, and I have 10,000 Rs. worth of grain in hand for the horses, elephants and other cattle. This is a fair beginning but it would have been more if Pid Naik had not left me a lot of heavy balances to clear off. You can mention this to Mill if you see him and say there is a prospect of increase of revenue in every district and department this year. Last year the increase was 25,000 Rs. This year it will be I suspect as much more. I can double the whole revenues in 7 years; it will be enough and some are doubled already. The Customs contract was 14,000 nominally, 12 really, when I came and this year it is 26,500. The District of Andola was 37,000 three years ago. This year it is 59,000 and will in time I hope be 80,000.

I sent the rough copy of the Sinde article to Mr. Palmer to read. He likes it much but you may not. I have hope, however, because I *did* take trouble with it. Poor old Roostum Khan is gone to his last account, and Ali Morad need have no further apprehension. Sir Charles Napier, they say, is very sore that he was not taken notice of. But I suspect the *truth* of his doings is gaining credence and the more it does, the worse he will be. He ought to be exposed. Sir Charles had no right to expect anything for the last matter; his troops were in the field, and he made a long march, exhibited himself at the G.G.'s Camp and departed with the tune of the King of the Cannibal Islands ringing in his ears. Does he expect a peerage for this?

India appears to me to want more writing up and support in peace than in war. We have proved that we

can take care of ourselves in the latter, and you must help us in the former. Do not let us down, therefore. You can do much to urge us on and the people at home to help us.

## LETTER 55

*Lingsoogur, July 12th 1846*

I have come over here for a few days to recruit and take a holiday from rather too much work which was beginning to tell upon nerves, stomach and digestion. Mrs. Paye and Miss Arrow<sup>1</sup> are cousins by marriage and are very pleasant people; very musical and very cheerful, and I find a relaxation from constant bother very acceptable. I wish they could stay here for a whole routine of duty at a Station, three years, but I am afraid the Corps will march at the end of the year and so deprive me of a place of refuge from ennui.

I have no particular news to give you. I was afraid all the Bedurs would have broken out the other day, and for several days I was very anxious. They had been excited by some people, partly in the Ranee's interest and partly by a Brahmin who aspires to the possession of some old hereditary office over them, which most deny to him though a considerable number, having separated from the rest, appeared inclined to uphold his pretensions by force. However, all came right after two or three days trouble and ended in their voluntarily giving into my hands the supreme authority among them in matters which have hitherto concerned them alone, and not the affairs of the State, and to the reconciliation of all conflicting parties. The Ranee was again very abject, dread-

ing, I suspect, that I should find out to what extent they had been tampered with. I know all she did, which was not more than a dirty intrigue to set everything in confusion, and I have taken no notice of her, nor of the old rascal who was at the bottom of the matter. Enough perhaps that both have been foiled. These intrigues, however, make one anxious, for it is no joke to have 8 or 10,000 of these wild people set in a ferment and they might commit themselves by an act of violence beyond my power of forgiveness.

The Nizam is in a series of messes: his own troops cannot put down the disorders in the country, and I hope Lord Hardinge won't allow the Contingent to be employed without being satisfied of the justness of the demand of Government (Nizam's), as I don't believe these have a leg to stand upon, and there is no Minister to negotiate with. Fraser must be in an awkward position just now. I do not hear that the Nizam's finances are in any more flourishing condition than they were. Ram Buksh<sup>2</sup> is fast sinking in every one's estimation, and I heartily wish the Governor General would come in with a strong hand and settle things properly. This kind of working of the Subsidiary system is really a disgrace to us. The King of Oude has taken the advice of Govt. and his affairs are becoming more disentangled: but at Hyderabad there is more than ordinary ignorance, debauchery, jealousy and general distraction and difficulty, and, whenever anything has to be done, it will be a task worthy of Metcalfe and Elphinstone and more than, I suspect, our old General can manage. However we shall see. He is an able man if he chooses to apply himself, but wants

knowledge of practical detail and, very sadly, suavity of manner and the *knack* of conciliating natives.

There have been many letters on the Sinde question lately, both in the Delhi and Bombay papers, all very good but, as you may believe, very anti-Napierish. There have been no replies given; in fact, without Sir Charles can deny his own official dispatches, he cannot get out of the mess he appears involved in by them. I shall be curious to hear what you say and think on the subject; all I am afraid of is that the T. may not choose to take the matter up on the ground of its real merits, but will suffer Sir C N's reputation to hide all consequences of his proceedings. Parts of Outram's book have been printed in the papers, and I trust it will become as generally known as it deserves to be. It will not have the style of Napier's, not that I like that, but it will have truth at any rate, which however may not be acceptable to everybody.

If you see Mill and *can* do so, please ask him whether we have any hope of pensions.<sup>3</sup> It is all nonsense to hope for a Retiring Fund. Govt. ought to pension us and I daresay will be made to do so in the end. Oliphant (Director) is, I *believe*, in favour of the thing; he is an old Nizam's Officer.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Paye and Miss Arrow were nieces of William Palmer. Mrs. Paye's husband was Captain John Richard Paye of the Nizam's army.

<sup>2</sup> Rambaksh, a nephew of the late Minister Chandu Lal, who had proved entirely incompetent to succeed him.

<sup>3</sup> When the Nizam's Contingent was reformed in 1858 the surviving local officers were retired with pensions. Taylor drew his from the date of his retirement from civil employment in 1860.



## LETTER 56

[Taylor's tirade against Sir Charles Napier must be taken with much reservation. However doubtful the method of the acquisition of Sind, and however absurd Sir Charles's claim that it yielded a surplus, it proved entirely incorrect to call it the 'Ireland of India'. Napier's vigorous and simple method of government brought peace and order to the land; the people gladly recognized his rule to be an improvement on that of the Mirs; later, the steps taken to improve the canals soon greatly increased the prosperity of the cultivators. It is true that the military force maintained was unduly large, but Napier was persuaded of the possibility of invasion from across the border, and, so long as the power in the Punjab remained in Sikh hands, he could argue that the force in Sind was of great utility. This was indeed proved in both the Punjab wars. The mortality among the European troops in Sind was at first very great. But Napier, after serious initial errors, effected a great improvement by withdrawing them from Upper Sind, and by building good barracks at Karachi and Hyderabad.

Captain Pope's letters, of which Outram sent copies to Taylor, referred to the transfer of the Turban, or sovereignty, of Upper Sind, from Mir Rustam to Mir Ali Murad.

The new Belooch Battalion was the second, now the 4th Battalion, 10th Baluch Regiment, the first battalion having been raised in 1844. Although they proved to be unnecessary for the internal security of the Province, both battalions soon showed and have ever since maintained their fighting worth.]

*Shorapoor, 29th July 1846*

I have received a letter from Outram enclosing copies of letters from Captain Pope, one of the former Collectors of Sinde, which are valuable to the apprehension of the Sinde question, and I therefore send copies to you. Of course they are private but the expression of his sentiment is so strong and well defined that his opinions, I should think, might be freely quoted or alluded to in any notice of the question. I entreat you and Delane to

examine Outram's book dispassionately and if, as I believe to be the case, and my opinion has existed from the first opening of the Sinde War, there is foul wrong and, worse than this, foul dishonesty at the bottom of the whole matter, I do trust you will loose your thunder and drown all future puffings and false statements on the part of the Napiers and the party which supports them. You will find that the Directors agree with you, and, I will be bound to say, the Ministry also, with the exception of the Duke. As to Lord Ellenborough, if he has not ere this comprehended that he was deceived and tricked, he ought to be obliged to you to show him and the people of England that this was so. But I cannot conceive that it is, in your sense of the word, a party question at all. It is one of plain Political right and wrong. It needs exposition and you have had but one from the Napiers in which it is difficult to say which is most astonishing—the falsehoods on every point with which it abounds, or the impudence with which they are put forward, when the contradiction of every one of them existed in official testimony.

We are paying from India a million and a half a year by the Parliamentary returns for Sinde and this is exclusive of the other items of expense of which I have sent a memo. to Delane. Can we stand this? And if we can why should we? Sir Charles Napier won't give up a man of his force, and the last G.O. gives the formation of a new Belooch Battalion which, I conclude, is another 2 lakhs to the expense. Look at the fearful mortality—1410 men swept off at once, and more dying. Fever again at Sukkur and the real sickly season, August and September,

still to come on. What do we gain by this horrid 'Ireland in India' ? How foolish to trust to the paper estimates of the Napiers. If Sinde really pays 9 lakhs, £90,000, into the Treasury, how is it that the returns show that it costs a million ? It is a simple process to send 9 lakhs, and draw 109 and more, and such I suppose is the case. Do expose this pestilential humbug. You are independent and can afford to snap your fingers at the Duke, Lord Ellenborough and these Napiers. There is no trade, no population even to supply the Troops, no profit. Let the Ameers have it back in God's name, and have a force enough to protect certain positions, secure free trade for the River, make them pay for the force if you will, and wash your hands of the rest. Why should we pay a million and a half a year, and bury thousands of gallant hearts in that horrid and unjustly acquired country ?

I am right well, and we have a glorious monsoon as yet, which has revived the hearts of my Ryots which were nearly faint. I hear from Hyderabad that Fraser has been singing my praises extensively, and is well pleased with what I have done. The Nizam's Government, I really believe, grows worse and worse. There is no order, no justice, no authority, 'no nothink' in its composition.

## LETTER 57

[Taylor refers briefly to the intrigues at Hyderabad. He is wrong in his belief that General Fraser's support of Suraj-ul-Mulk had failed. Shortly after the date of this letter, the Governor-General, in a letter to the Nizam, strongly supported the Resident's recommendations, and in consequence Suraj-ul-Mulk was appointed Minister with full powers on 2 November. It is curious to find

Taylor advocating the claims of Rambaksh, as his incompetence was generally recognized.

At the end of the letter Taylor regrets that his article on Outram had been found to be too long for insertion in a Review, as he was anxious that Outram's position and the Sind question in general should be more fully understood.]

*Shorapoor, 23rd August 1846*

Fraser is doing no good, between ourselves, at Hyderabad. He has supported Sooraj-ool-Moolk's pretensions to the Ministry from the first against the Nizam and has been defeated, which served him right, by the Nizam's appointing Rambuksh, whom Fraser had declared unfit. Fraser has found out that he has been played upon in city intrigues and is trying to back out, but he has begun sundry acts of interference about the Rohillas and some scoundrel Zamindars, and if he can't carry his points, which does not seem likely, he will have put himself into an undignified position. He had better have supported Rambuksh from the first, bad as he is, as the Nizam fancied him, and guided Rambuksh, which he might have done, than opposed him and be obliged to recognize him afterwards. The countenance of a man who is vicious, as Suraj-ool-Moolk is, has filled the city with factions and intrigue. I marvel that Fraser ever desired to give mere advice, for it is annoying to a degree to be asked for it, to give outlines of reform, and find all wasted or contemptuously treated. Advice to Native States should only be given as commands, more especially in such a one as Hyderabad where everything is at sixes or sevens.

## LETTER 58

[In this letter, probably written in September 1846, Taylor rejoices at Reeve's triumph over gout and lassitude, but not at his escape from renewed matrimony. He tells how the State of Shorapur is recovering from its previous misery, and how he hopes to get Rs. 35,000 additional revenue, which will give 2 lakhs of surplus, and, as all arrears are paid off, things will go along swimmingly. He alludes to the friction between the Lahore Durbar and Maharaja Golab Singh of Kashmir, and hopes that the Indian Government will not be drawn in. He continues:]

I wish Lord Hardinge had not hampered himself with Golab. I don't see the end of that alliance at all. I was lukewarm about it when every one else cried it up, and am more than lukewarm now. I am glad Lord Hardinge stays. They say he is not popular: perhaps not, but he is a wise and moderate man, and I don't know that you have a better to send. Lord Clarendon<sup>1</sup> you once spoke of; perhaps he won't come. Anyway Lord Hardinge ought to be best able to work out his own policy.

I am glad you *will* read Outram, very glad. Depend on it, this Sinde matter is politics, not history. Present politics affect our purses and Sinde does this sorely. Give it up, as I wrote to the T. It is no use to us, and we can get at any rate a reputation for magnanimity by saving our own pockets. Outram's book nearly drove Sir Charles Napier mad, but he can't answer a word though gnawing his finger ends to the quick to be able to do so. He will be silent and his silence is the best policy; it will be taken or mistaken for a great spirit and indifference to calumny!!

I went over to Lingsoogoor for a few days, and stayed with Paye and his wife and sister, the two last being my

wife's cousins, and good souls. They are very good musicians and it was pleasant to hear anything and to help in a glee after being silent so long. Nothing new at Hyderabad. I suspect from what I hear that Lord Hardinge does not quite approve of the line of policy there and no wonder. Fraser does no good that I can see and is not likely to do any. He has not the way with him.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Clarendon (1800-70) was shortly after the date of this letter appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

## LETTER 59

[The trouble in Kashmir was due to the refusal of the Sikh Governor of that Province to hand it over to Golab Singh, to whom it had been sold by the Indian Government. He was undoubtedly instigated to this action by Lal Singh, still Vazir in the Punjab. Henry Lawrence accompanied Golab Singh's force, and the rebellion was easily put down with his support. Moreover, he established a moral influence over Golab Singh which was of great value in the future.

Taylor begins this letter, dated from Shorapur on 26 October 1846, by mentioning the trouble in Kashmir and the rumours of the defeat of the Maharaja Golab Singh's troops. This had made it necessary to send the Indian Government's troops to Kashmir. He continues:]

Everybody, almost, said that the Treaty of Amritsar was the best thing in the world, but I took the liberty to think that the G.G. had temporized. I would rather have seen Cashmere retained than sold, and I think it would have been quite enough to have sold it or given it away when we had proved it to be troublesome or unprofitable. A whole nation surely is not to be bought and sold with the same ease as a herd of cattle. Yet this is the principle apparently on which we parted with Cashmere.

It is a wonderful thing, I think, to see our armies in possession of Lahore and Jummoo and the armies of these States away on distant expeditions. Truly we may now believe that we are trusted. I do not see that we can ever leave Lahore at all, and strongly suspect that, as I feared from the first, our temporary sojourn will end in a permanent Contingent or Subsidiary Force.

The Nizam's Government is growing more and more contemptible daily. It would be a mercy to insist, as in Mysore, upon a Commission of which, of course, you would make me junior member. It would be as easy to establish one here as it was in Mysore and I don't think any one would object except the blackguard mercenaries at the Capital, a few of the intriguing officials and those people who get their bread by getting up quarrels and intrigues. The Nizam's nobles and relations would be content to be quiet and enjoy their Jagheers without the fear of having their throats cut or being bullied by Patans or Arabs, or Gosayns. The trading classes would rejoice beyond measure for now they are plundered without redress, and trade would improve for of course the Commission would regulate the transit duties which are now almost prohibitory of trade in amount and a vexatious method of impost. The people of the country would rejoice at being delivered from a mode of Government which frets and vexes and plunders them, under which the revenue decreases from year to year and the dishonest only thrive.

## LETTER 60

[Taylor, having little local news, continues to harp on the Sind question. Though it was undoubtedly at that time a drain on the resources of India, he seems to exaggerate the burden, and to ignore the strategic and commercial advantages which made it necessary to control the Indus valley. His dislike of borrowing by the State was natural at the time, but he failed to recognize that the developments which he saw to be necessary could not be financed out of the low taxation prevailing, with land revenue as practically the sole source for the funds required for such development.]

*Camp Ankulgee, Dec. 10th 1846*

I believe I wrote more sorely than there was occasion for about the Cashmere matter. Had not matters smoothed down very rapidly we should by this time have been engaged in snowy defiles with an enemy we might have seen but should not have been able to reach. We should have won no glory and lost as many lakhs, or more, as we did in the campaign of Kolapoor. Lord Hardinge's 'Iqbal' is evidently of no small order. He seems to have some capital hardworking Political officers, at the head of whom is Lawrence,<sup>1</sup> who contrive to smooth down refractory backs in a marvellously short space of time. In a word, Lord Hardinge's system is a system and not a scramble and, if it proceeds as it has, few will dare to quarrel with us in future.

I am delighted to see that the T. has taken up the Sind matter at last, and that it is seen that it is a case for to-day and not one that belongs to past time. If we had bought it and paid for it out and out, and the balance sheet of India was pretty even—if it did not cost us a million and a half a year we might retain it, but how



can we do so with this enormous expense attached to us? India just pays for itself, and that is all, even if carefully managed, and we had better far have a couple of crores of surplus revenue in our Treasury vaults than trust to the public in an emergency. If this 5 per cent loan had been wanted for a war, and the war could not have gone on without it, we should have been in a precious plight by this time. Borrowing by nations is thought little of among you, but here it is not reputable, and interest at 5 and 6 per cent is so much additional burden upon the State, which cuts *me* off from all the visions of roads, canals, railways, proper education and general *civil* improvement which I have been thinking and writing on for the last five years, nay, ten or fifteen, and ever since I was able to think at all. So I don't like to see Government driven to borrow, and the more especially as I am very firmly persuaded that the dirty millstone of Sinde has a very great deal to do with it. I can't understand why people choose to have dust thrown in their eyes by the Napiers and rather keep it there though it hurts vastly, than take a clean towel and water and wash it out. People are beginning, however, to think about the towel and they will come to the water in time. I see the *Times* has begun in earnest, though it has not attacked the vital part yet. I can't understand why the Napiers should be allowed to print 200 deliberate lies and yet get support. I can't see, if they are not lies, why Outram is not brought to a Court Martial for defamation and for even more deliberate and more malicious lying to clear himself. I am not going to crow yet, but I intend to do so when you are all convinced.

All is well in my Kingdom, revenue increasing very satisfactorily. I shall have better than 8 lakhs this year, a good Rs. 40,000 of it increase over last. The country is a sheet of cultivation and but few parts waste now. Mr. Coles<sup>2</sup> the Collector of the Company's Sholapoor District was with me for three days and was much pleased with the appearance of the country. Here is a report from another man, Hervey,<sup>3</sup> Assistant Superintendent Thuggee Dept. 'The quiet and orderly demeanour of the inhabitants of the Sawasthan<sup>4</sup> was striking to me, who had heard so much of the outlawry and wildness of its people. But for the absence of belted Peons<sup>5</sup> I should have considered myself travelling in the Company's district, and, from the superior cultivation, it appears the more prosperous of the two. I was happy at noticing your name reverberating throughout the land, and its many pretty little wooded hamlets.'

*Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas!* This being a flourish of trumpets, I have done.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Lawrence (1806-57) was Resident at Lahore at this time.

<sup>2</sup> George Coles, Bombay Civil Service, 1825-54, died in 1883.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Charles Hervey of the Bombay army, afterwards Superintendent of the Thagi Department, General and C.B. In his book, *Some Records of Crime*, he mentions his co-operation with Taylor. He died in 1903.

<sup>4</sup> Sawasthan. The Hindu name for a State under a Hindu ruler.

<sup>5</sup> Belted Peons. The subordinates of the Revenue Department who wore a belt or *patta*.

## LETTER 61

[Taylor, having little news of importance, again expounds his doctrine of non-interference, that is, letting the Indian States rot till they collapsed. This doctrine ignores the losses suffered by the subjects of these States during the period of misgovernment. The lack of wisdom and foresight involved in the doctrine is best indicated by the number of well-administered States existing at the present day, and especially by the position of Hyderabad itself.]

*Camp Nelingi 25th December 1846*

I hope Lord Hardinge will pluck up courage, moral courage, to cut his present connection with the disreputable people at Lahore. It requires some to do so, because everybody says you must support the Government you have set up. My own opinion has been long made up that these connections are more trouble than they are worth. I wished Lord Hardinge *could* have taken the Punjab when he had it at his feet. I *hope* he may take it when it is again unruly. I am entirely of Lord Wm. Bentinck's mode of thinking that, if a Government can't stand of itself, it ought not to have our aid to prop it up, and that, when it falls, out of sheer exhaustion and bad management, it ought to be let die. Pouring cordials down its throat is all very 'moderate and beneficent' according to some ideas. I confess, not to my own. No one would think of doctoring a sick tiger he found in the jungle, and I look on all these Governments, and Lahore in particular, as wild beasts which are only tolerable when they are quiet, very grand to look at at a distance, but tigers in disposition and as such ought to be avoided, or if we get into communication with them, it ought to be to give them a *coup de grâce*, not to knock them down and set them up again, only to be scratched when they

have recovered from their temporary insensibility. In the name of all that is good, let us get out of the Punjab as fast as possible. They say Jowahir Singh, nephew of Golab Singh, will be Wuzeer on our instance.—Worse and worse, why should we be responsible for Jowahir Singh, or any other Singh? As we nominate a man or propose him so that he dare not be refused, as Suraj ool Moolk was at Hyderabad the other day, so I conclude we are answerable for him. The *Times* political leaders on Indian matters are always quoted and much dwelt upon by the Indian papers. If you would effectually review the political interference and subsidiary system, weak and inefficient and hurtful as they are, you would 'do for' them in a short time. There is not a man who has anything to do with them, from myself up to the Governor General, who is not sick of them.

I don't know what Fraser and Malcolm are doing at Hyderabad. Malcolm is unusually silent. I don't think they will do what they expect to do. They could do it but only directly. Working at second hand is poor work, especially with Natives of high rank.

Who is to come to Bombay?<sup>1</sup> The man named, Lord Dalhousie, is by all accounts a very able one. He cannot do better than take Bombay first, with the reversion of the G.G.ship. Bombay is an active place, and any one with *nous* would be sure to learn. We want men of business, men who can think and combine, for Governor General. None of your fiery geniuses who won't mind any one, but men who have sense to avail themselves of the able counsel they receive, and sense to detect a fallacy when it is tendered by men of pretension.

My revenue is improving much, but it is hard work alone and without a survey. I could find lots to do for another man.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. George Russell Clerk, see Letter 12, n. 2, was appointed to the first of his two tenures of the Governorship of Bombay in January 1847.

## LETTER 62

[In consequence of the proved treachery of Lal Singh, the Vazir of the Punjab, the Treaty of Amritsar was amended, and a Council of eight Sikh Sardars appointed, under the Presidency of Henry Lawrence upon whom, as Kaye says, 'an almost kingly mantle descended'. The system, even if it did not, as some believe, accelerate the second Punjab war, would have led to grave difficulties, if that war had not swept it away.

It is characteristic of Taylor's prejudice that he should have assumed that Suraj-ul-mulk would commit evil deeds, before, as Taylor admits, he had done anything wrong. Probably in all matters connected with the Resident's policy Taylor was much influenced by William Palmer.]

### *Camp Mundirwar 9th January 1847*

You will see what they have done with the Punjab, and as we did not at first kick out the w—s and pimps and rapsallions who are dignified with the names of Ranees, Sirdars and the like, and as we found ourselves taken in by Lall Singh and the Ranee, we have done all we could do by insisting on the only alternative that remained, of governing the country during the minority. That much *ultimate* good will come of this I don't think, and there is an old adage about a silk purse and a sow's ear. But we could evidently not have taken the Punjab on the excuse of Lall Singh's misconduct (which was not, to all appearances, that of the other members of the State), when we were magnanimous enough to give it up.

I suppose now, if anything happens to the young Maharaja, that we shall take the country; indeed, I suppose it would escheat to us for lack of heirs. I am grateful that there is no Resident, as at Hyderabad etc., going through the solemn farce of giving advice and then sitting down on his hunkers, or in his armchair, to see it made ridiculous. Verily if Lord H. or Currie<sup>1</sup> or Lawrence had consented to such a thing I should have gone furious. I am heartily glad we have done with the abominable partnership we had with Lall Singh and the Ranee. It was disgraceful to us, and has thrown back the settlement of the Punjab for a year, but perhaps on the other hand made it more sure than if it had been begun when men's minds were hot, when the Punjab Sirdars thought much of themselves, and not, as now, when they confess themselves disgusted with all belonging to them.

I enclose an article from the *Madras Spectator* on Hyderabad affairs which *ought* to have come to me direct, but went to Hyderabad first by mistake. It was too late for the T. letter, which is as long as I dare make it already, so I send it to you to make any use you like of. The idea of putting Sahoo-kars to manage the Treasury is much like setting hungry rats to guard cheese. Malcolm wrote to me some while ago that he was afraid it would be, but in such confidence that I dare not betray it. I don't know what has come to Fraser. I owe him much kindness, but for any practical use he might as well be Resident of Khamkatka. He has carried two points in his Residency, turning out Chandoo Lale and getting in Soorajool-Moolk, and all I see of his doing verifies Frank Gresley's remark, that he was like a man who could take

a watch to pieces, but could not put it together again. No good will come of Sooraj-ool-Moolk. Fraser, having got him in, thinks he ought to do everything, and the other evinces, as I supposed he would, a strong desire to throw Fraser overboard, or to do as little as he can in his company. It is always the way with these brutes. They do everything to get put up under the *éclat* of Residency support, and then, when it is obtained, it is used as a cloak for evil deeds. Sooraj-ool-Moolk has not begun his yet, but they will not be long unapparent I think, and we have about as good ground for trusting him as we had for trusting Lall Singh. Verily we are too 'green'.

As regards to Sinde, Outram is not idle, The Boogties<sup>2</sup> have begun again and came down in a body of 1,200 men to plunder and carried off their booty handsomely in the face of a corps of cavalry. More troops have therefore been ordered out to the frontier and perhaps Sir Charles may make another expedition to the hills. This attack was very *malapropos* for reducing the force of Sinde, some 8,000 men. I leave the question of the retention of Sinde therefore to you. To my perception we might give it up easily and get a good bargain for its restoration to the Ameers. To govern it with profit, or even with an even balance, seems to be impossible. Why should the servants of the Company have to help to pay for Sinde's occupation? By all accounts there are to be heavy reductions of salary to meet the extra expenses of the Govt., of which those in Sinde are better than a million sterling a year.

I cannot come to you till the Estate in Ceylon begins

to bear and give returns. This is my sheet anchor. I am off to Muktul, 70 miles, to see Palmer for a few days, and shall hear much of Hyderabad doings.

<sup>1</sup> Currie, Sir Frederick (1799-1875), at this time Foreign Secretary of the Indian Government.

<sup>2</sup> The raids of the Bugtis, a Baluch tribe, were stopped, and the northern frontier of Sind kept in order, when its charge was handed over, about the date of this letter, to John Jacob and his Sind Irregular Horse. Taylor was, as usual, entirely wrong in his anticipations about that Province.

## LETTER 63

[From the last sentence, it would appear that Reeve had protested, as well as he might, about the thin diaphanous paper which Taylor used and not infrequently crossed severely.]

Taylor begins by repeating, much on the same lines as in his last letter, his satisfaction at the arrangements at Lahore, where Lawrence was 'Resident or Regent'. He goes on:]

*Camp Goodoor 8th February 1847*

Things are too new at Lahore to remark upon, and I am actually too busy to write to the T. this mail. I could not even do so last mail as a press of horrid accounts work came in just as the time for writing had come. Lord Hardinge has carried out his peace policy triumphantly, and, as he guaranteed the country to the young Prince, he has established the only means of ensuring it to him. Eight years of virtual British rule will change the people vastly. I hope his [Lawrence's] brother<sup>1</sup> may keep Peshawar quiet. I suppose there will be no opposition on the part of the Sikh Sirdar at Peshawar, and if there *is* any difficulty, Lawrence senior at Lahore will send a new man who will be decorously subservient. The only subject of anxiety in India is the



state of the finances, with the million in Sind and a heavy army expenditure pressing on them. The tax or duty on opium has been increased 20 lakhs but this is a drop in the ocean.

I hear from Hyderabad from a native friend that the Nizam and Suraj-ool-Moolk do not get on. No one expected they would and S.O.M. is already in hobbles of no ordinary magnitude. Fraser's contrivance is but putting a great bit of rag on a bad sore, the corruption of which will not only ooze through the rag, but dirty those who put it on. No good ever has come, or ever will come, of setting up a man who is objectionable in any way to his Sovereign, without the Sovereign is put on the shelf altogether, and, if we choose to do this, we had better by far take the reins and drive the coach ourselves. Half and half systems are going out and the policy at Lahore has struck, I hope, a deep blow at them. I am convinced from the leaders I see reprinted that your opinions and sympathies are with me.

I hope I am not mercenary, but if the T. would pay me more liberally, that is if I am *worth* it, *not else*, I should be very much obliged to them. I don't look for much, but Praed's account shows me I have got but little for five years' hard work and writing much which I think has led to good results. I shan't say a word more, and, whether I am paid or not, will not cease to write as long as my communications are acceptable.

My work goes on slowly but well, and I hope in the end Fraser and Government will be satisfied with this year's result. It will increase the land revenue by  $\frac{2}{3}$ ds more and all will be collected if we have good seasons.

In sending my last year's accounts up to Government, Fraser has said all that I could expect. I am busy surveying a whole village-lands and making a map of the fields, to assist some remarks on a general revenue survey which I have made to Fraser, and which would be very useful. It is good exercise for the body, and practice in surveying is always useful to us soldier people.

I won't plague you with thin paper again. Pardon.

<sup>1</sup> Major, later Sir, George St. Patrick Lawrence (1805-84). He was in fact older than his brother Henry, whom Taylor calls 'senior'.

## LETTER 64

[Taylor continues his reflections on General Fraser's policy. While it is clear that Suraj-ul-Mulk was suggested to the Nizam by the Resident, there is every reason to believe that he did his best to initiate the reforms afterwards enforced by his better-known nephew Sir Salar Jung. The reference to Dighton, William Palmer's rival, is probably an indication of the source of Taylor's criticism. The statement that the Arabs did what they pleased is especially unfair to Fraser, who did his best to have them removed altogether, but received no support either from the Nizam or from the Indian Government.]

*Camp Sirwal 8th March 1847*

I have no news in particular to give you. What I could devise I have written to the *Times*. They are doing no good at Hyderabad. Every one says, as appeared probable from the outset, that Fraser has fallen into the hands of Mr. Dighton and a Moonshee of his. These worthies helped to get Suraj-ool-Moolk into office in order to further their own plans of getting back the districts which Rambuksh the late Minister had taken from them by the Nizam's desire, and on complaint of the Zamin-

dars who were connected with them. Malcolm, who is the only man worth his salt there, is not where he should be and it is concluded his advice is unpalatable to the General. People expected much and find nothing done, but a few old men displaced and new ones put in, which is the usual consequences of all changes in Ministries. The Arabs do as they like. The Nizam has grown more and more cool to the new Minister and the consequence is that he does not command the money market as is most needful, seeing that the collections don't suffice for the payments of stipends, troops, and other matters very needful of settlement. No one speaks with any expectation of success, and I suppose after a short struggle the Minister will either give in, or subside into a nonentity as little satisfactory to Fraser as to the Nizam. It is a pity Fraser interfered at all. He might have done what he pleased with Rambuksh whom the Nizam likes, or liked, but he would not, and now he has got his own man I expect he will be disappointed. The Nizam would bear more difficulty from his own nominee than he will from the person who has been, as he says, forced upon him.

My own matters go on very smoothly, and the increase of Revenue this year will be very considerable, I imagine Rs. 40,000. I have just finished the settlement of Andola, my chief district for five years including the present. The Revenue was Rs. 55,000 last year, in five more it will be Rs. 92,000 if we have decent seasons. Other districts are progressing in like manner, and the amount of new cultivation is prodigious. One wonders how it is done, for the working community appears very limited. I hardly think we shall get into Shorapoor before another

month, but with good shade over head and other means I contrive to manage and defy the heat which never does me any harm.

I am glad to say that the cocoanut trees are flourishing vastly. I have now no fears for the enterprise. The world must have oil and, as whales won't grow fast enough for its consumption, I hope cocoanuts will, and in my portion of them lies my hope that I may see you again.

## LETTER 65

[In spite of Taylor's previous statement that he would leave the remuneration for his letters to the editor of *The Times*, he is so shocked at the smallness of the payment made that he is moved to protest.

Returning from meeting William Palmer at Muktl, he is full of fresh forebodings about Suraj-ul-Mulk.

To find Outram still collecting figures to attack his old chief Sir Charles Napier is regrettable to our ideas, but indicates the bitterness of the dispute between them. The view that Sind was not defensible against an attack from the Kandahar direction has proved to be chimerical. Not so the idea of levying an income-tax in India which seemed to Taylor so extraordinary a proposition.]

*Shorapoor 9th April 1847*

I do not write by this mail to the *Times*, first because there is no time to do so, and secondly because what you write is anything but encouraging. They ought to pay me more than £35 for 14 months' correspondence, some 20 or 30 letters, some of them long and particular ones about Sind, Railways, and other matters. I enclose to you a bit of a remonstrance and siffication for the Editor, and if they tell me, either direct or through you, to go on and will settle something, I shall know what I have to

look to. I do not want much, but £100 a year or even £75 ought not to be too much on the principle that the more a man is encouraged, the better he will work. This dribble of £35 barely pays my subscription to newspapers, Calcutta, Delhi, and Bombay, postage of same and postage of my own private correspondence maintained for the *Times* purposes. I say no more, except that if they are liberal or even reasonable, I shall go on; if not, perhaps I had better stop, and look elsewhere. What do you think?

Fraser is either doing too much or too little. If the G.G. has told him to interfere and direct, he is doing, and can do, nothing to effect order. If he has been told, as it is believed, not to interfere, he has committed himself to Suraj-ool-Moolk's appointment which now pleases no one, not even himself. Suraj-ool-Moolk is helpless because he has no party, is not respected, and is seen not to have the unqualified support which was anticipated for him from the Supreme Government. Fraser has shut himself up, sees no one and knows nothing. This is not the way to manage Hyderabad. All he can do to justify Suraj-ool-Moolk's appointment or his support, is to point to several proclamations regarding the Arabs, Rohillas &c. which Suraj-ool-Moolk has issued and which, not having been obeyed, nor can the Minister enforce them, leave him weaker than he was before.

Outram sent me some papers and accounts connected with Sindé on which I wrote a long letter to the T. I don't know whether it will be printed, but it ought to be. Though some of the calculations may be faulty, a lakh or two more or less here and there, yet in the main

they are correct, as the papers are official from which I draw up my statements. Sindé never will pay and is a weak indefensible frontier. Only very lately there was a considerable apprehension of an attack on Shikarpoor from the Bolan Pass by the Kandahar people. A threatening even would require more troops and with any transmission of them the Sindé Bill runs up unpleasantly high in spite of Napier's asseverations that there are 26 lakhs of surplus revenue! Why not restore the Ameers as Jagheerdars and keep up a force at Kurrachee and Shikarpur or Sukkur as Outram suggested? You cannot, ought not, to shut your eyes to the cost this conquest entails on India. Your system of taxation will stretch, ours will not. If Lord Hardinge were to lay an Income Tax on India, bless me what a row you would make about it. We are out of elbows and out of pocket, *cui bono*?

I am very flourishing and suspect I shall have 50,000 Rs. more revenue than last year. I have a lakh and a half now surplus after paying the Nizam's Government its Rs. 40,000 and every stipendiary and soldier is paid up to the end of last month. I have some Rs. 50,000 outstanding balances in course of collection, so I shall be rich in time.

## LETTER 66

[Taylor's reference to Russian methods was caused by a rumour of the intention of Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mahomed, Amir of Afghanistan, to invade India.]

The necessity for the 'silence order' forbidding officers to write to the Press may have been accentuated by the unseemly dispute between Napier and Outram. There was, however, ample reason for it on general grounds. It is astonishing to read the contribu-

tions to magazines and newspapers of such excellent men as Henry Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, and John Jacob, and the effusions of less worthy officers were worse. It is amusing to find Taylor blaming Napier for continuing the dispute, and praising Outram for his silence, when he goes on to hope that *The Times* will publish his attack on Napier based on information which Outram had supplied.

The attack on Fraser continues, although Taylor is good enough to hope that the General himself may be spared by *The Times*. The admission, however, that the pay of the Contingent was being regularly received from the new Dewan or Vazir is important as this was, from the view of the Government of India, the most essential point.]

*Shorapoor 24th April 1847*

I have written to the *Times* and shall continue to write till I hear from you or from someone in the office on the subject of ceasing altogether, or going on upon a proper understanding. I should be sorry to leave the T., having fought many a good fight in its pages, and perhaps done my mite of good to the enlightenment of your public. If I could get enough to help on Ally's education, I should be quite content, and am not greedy by any means.

There is not the least doubt that Russia can do us a great deal of unobtrusive mischief by setting on small dogs to bark at us and to snap at our heels, for we sally out with armies to chastise them, which tells most cruelly upon our Exchequer. It was the master stroke in politics of the century, Russia drawing us into the Affghan War, and she would be glad to draw us into another. We may laugh at the Russian or Affghan or Persian influence now we have the Punjab and, while I would have taken it *at first* at all hazards, I admire the way in

which Lord Hardinge has virtually got it, at least for some time at least.

The silence order has been published again. Is this to stop the Napier and Outram matter which Napier goes on with at Kurrachee in a miserable piddling newspaper he has got there? Outram does nothing now, is quiet and has left what he has put forward to push its way. I hope the T. published my last Sinde letter which lifts the veil a good deal from the question of profit and loss there. I am glad to hear from O. that he has got Baroda, which is a 1st class Residency. This shews he is under no cloud at any rate. He pressed me very hard to go to see him at Sattara, but I can't move a foot.

Fraser gets on worse and worse at Hyderabad and, if he doesn't take care, will goad the Nizam into sauciness à la Napier. Malcolm is out of heart. I make an extract from a letter from him: 'Falsehood and concealment flourish as vigorously as ever they did in the good old times of Chandoo Lall, and with the exception of our getting the pay for the Contingent regularly, I see little difference between the old and present régime. There are perhaps somewhat fewer acts of individual oppression, but the fear of our interference *alone* keeps people quiet. Nothing will go on properly as long as there is estrangement between the Resident and the Nizam. The Dewan should be managed through our influence with the Nizam, not the Nizam through our influence with the Dewan. Our interference should be exercised only in emergent cases, and when exercised should be open and avowed.' I don't know how Lord Hardinge manages to look on and just allow of enough muddling to do mischief.



If you notice the subject, attack the system vigorously but spare the old General, without you include Lord Hardinge in your strictures, for one is wrong to meddle as he has done, and the other not only in allowing it but in not preventing it.

They have subscribed handsomely in India for the Scotch and Irish,<sup>1</sup> and I have collected *here* some 800 Rupees which will be duly remitted to Bombay. Perhaps I can get more.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the failure of the harvest in Ireland and Scotland.

## L E T T E R 6 7

[The 'silence order' referred to in the previous letter did not deter Taylor from contributing an article to the Indian Press. The attribution of this article to Malcolm, Fraser's own assistant, shows how familiar the practice must have been of officers in responsible positions writing for newspapers. Malcolm had indeed written, probably shortly before this date, an article on Hyderabad affairs for the *Calcutta Quarterly Review*. It did not, however, appear till 1849, when Malcolm had left Hyderabad.]

*Shorapoor 6th May 1847*

Everything is at sixes and sevens at Hyderabad, Sooraj-ool-Moolk doing no good and likely to do none that I can see. I have sent my father a couple of *Delhi Gazettes* for which I wrote a short article which has been made use of editorially. I hear the Hyderabad public have fathered the article on Malcolm, which is amusing. Fraser has set himself resolutely to see and hear nothing that is disagreeable, nothing that goes against his policy. He won't believe that money is now being borrowed by Suraj-ool-Moolk from the Arab mercenaries, because Suraj-ool-Moolk issued a proclamation that no one was

to borrow from them. He won't believe in the assassination or rather murder of their debtors by Arab creditors, he won't believe that gang robbers increase, in fact he has neither eyes nor ears for anything but what pleases him. A vast deal of ill feeling to us comes out of this which is all attributable to the wretched system which is being pursued. Lucknow is perhaps in as bad a state as Hyderabad, and the sooner something is done to mend them the better. I imagine however, if Lord Hardinge is going home, that he will leave this work to his successor, that is, if there be not a crash before he can get away. How one has been avoided so long I cannot make out.

Outram has got Baroda, which is a step higher than Sattara and the best political thing in the Bombay Presidency. He writes to me that it was the more gratifying because entirely unsolicited. I am glad of it, because it proves that his answers to the Napiers have not hurt him which some feared they would do, and because a man who did more for India than ever can be estimated or rewarded, at a most critical period, was scurvily treated, and badly recompensed. He has now risen again, and may succeed to one of the highest Residencies in time. I wish he was at Hyderabad! I would hope to rise too if I was in the Company's Army; as I am, there is no hope and I must hold on here till I can get away for good. We are all quiet and healthy here, both the most satisfactory matters to report. I have not known so healthy a season as this for years. I hope the cholera is not gone westwards, but it is your 14/15th year. 1832/33 was your last I think; here its severe visitations come about every 14 years.

## LETTER 68

[Taylor explains to Reeve that he keeps no irregular female establishment. The frankness, both of Reeve's curiosity, and of Taylor's reply, may seem surprising. Although, however, such connexions were already far less common in India than they had been in previous generations, the loneliness and absence of European society in a Service like the Nizam's might be regarded as making them more possible than elsewhere. Taylor's denial, made in confidence to a relative and intimate friend, may be accepted as being good evidence in rebuttal of the loose charge against him referred to in the Introduction.]

*Shorapoor 13th May 1847*

My Father mentions in his last of 5th April that a letter of mine had been published in the T. of the 1st April and had received notice in a leader and I therefore hope that we are not to separate. Much good may be done by keeping Indian subjects before the eyes of the public in a quiet and familiar way, many abuses exposed, many defects remedied. I have fought many a battle in the *Times* pages, and am ready to fight many another on the Subsidiary system, on Sinde, on trade and production, on Railways or aught else that may be necessary.

I am afraid Lord Hardinge will not stay, yet he is just the man for us, quiet, steady and true. No trickery, no political shuffling, no humbug. I shall be very sorry to see him go for, unless Palmerston comes, I don't know who you have. Lords Elgin and Clarendon won't come, they say.

No, I have no zenana. Carry and you are wrong, and I am glad of it. I have had a struggle with myself about it, but have hitherto kept free and hope to do so. I say I have had a struggle and you may believe it for here

chastity in women is, I hear, rare, and I had offers enow. They have ceased now, being refused, and the women, I believe, feel I am not to be tempted. Verily and truly I am alone. Nor will I marry in India. I desire to come home and settle among you and if I be too old then to marry, I will remain as I am. My father too writes, 'don't marry in India, come home to us and settle'. But can I stand 6 years more of this solitude? Zenanas are pleasant but dangerous for men as I am. No woman would be without her influence. There are backstairs in India as well as in Europe, where there is any one living in back apartments. Better there should be no stairs at all, or no apartments, i.e. that they should be utterly empty. Again there is the dread of children, by no means an uncommon accompaniment, but the rather a certainty. Pardon all this, I speak out to you more freely than to any one else.

## LETTER 69

[The beginning of the letter, not here fully reproduced, refers to an incident at Hyderabad, an account of which, from General Fraser's point of view, is given on p. 222 of his son's Memoir. In May 1847 there were nearly 10,000 undisciplined troops of the Nizam, known as the Bar and Line. These were entirely distinct from the highly disciplined Contingent to which Taylor belonged.

The Minister, Suraj-ul-Mulk, proposed, as a measure of economy, to discharge 6,000 of these troops, paying them their arrears of pay. He made no suggestion of paying the arrears of the 4,000 who were to be retained, with the result that the whole 10,000 mutinied. As the Minister's life was threatened, he applied to the Resident for military help. The latter marched a strong force of European and Indian troops to the City gate and, under this threat of action against them, the mutinous troops submitted and the reduction in their number was made. This action of the Resident

was only approved by the Indian Government after considerable delay, and is bitterly attacked by Taylor. It is difficult, however, to see what other course the Resident could have taken, to avoid disorder and loss of life in the City. Taylor's attitude seems inconsistent. He was anxious to see the riff-raff removed from Hyderabad. At the same time he advised that there should be no interference till matters became so bad that the people would welcome the interference of the British Indian Government. This suggestion appears to ignore the intermediate sufferings and losses of the people.]

*Shorapoor 13th June 1847*

Hyderabad affairs are in a very bad state and not likely to get better, unless Lord Hardinge interferes in earnest and makes a clean sweep of all the ruffianly riff-raff, Arabs, Rohillas and other tribes who have been allowed to collect in the City for many years past. General Fraser was clearly duped by his precious protégé, and would have been in an awful mess if there had been any fighting in the City. It was as much as even our people could do to stand the insults that were put upon them, and nothing but the very perfection of discipline brought them out unscathed, and saved the City. Fraser had no business to move a man till the Nizam asked him. The Nizam, who was pigheaded, has become ten times worse and will not help a bit. These battalions must be paid, every one must be paid, and, unless a good crore of Rupees can be paid down on the nail, matters must go on from bad to worse. Nothing can save the State but the dismissal of all the riffraff and it would not surprise me if the G.G. were to take the matter in hand. He may on the other hand wig Fraser for meddling, and leave things either to get worse or to right themselves as chance will have it.

Look, however, at the working of the system. Not one Resident in a dozen can keep entirely quiet, and yet, if there is any meddling, matters get worse infinitely. A pretty errand it was to go into the City to bully some miserable starving wretches for no other reason but that they asked for their pay, 28 months, in a determined sort of way. How much more dignified it would have been if the Resident had let the Nizam and his people grind on in their old fashion, cheating and being cheated until they came to a deadlock and threw themselves into the arms of the Government of India as the people at Lahore did.

Lawrence seems to be getting on very quietly, and, though some people shake their heads and say it will not do, I consider it will do remarkably well, and I wish that every Native State in India was under the same sort of management.

Outram has gone to Baroda. He has by no means given up his hope of getting one of the highest Residencies, and his being removed to Baroda, a high post, shows that he is in good odour. I know he is with the Court, though he may not be with the Board of Control in consequence of his opposition to the Napiers. I have written two letters in the *Friend of India* on Sind revenue matters which have set people thinking a good deal, I hear, because they are compiled from public data which Outram and I compiled between us. I can stand a good deal but Sir Charles' proclamation was a deal too impudent and false to swallow. Sind is no trouble just now: but it will take 40 or 50 lakhs from India for ever. If this can be spared, there is no more to be said.

My own little matter gets on very well. All I can do now is to enclose a statement of the increase in Land Revenue and cultivation *only* in the last 3 years.

[The statement shows that in three years, i.e. from 1843-4 to 1846-7, the area of cultivation had increased from 190,000 to 263,000 bigas, and the land revenue collections from Rs. 178,000 to Rs. 237,000 or about 33 per cent.]

### LETTER 70

[Taylor admits Reeve's criticism ~~that~~ his letters to *The Times* had been too long and diffuse, and attributes this to his being alone, and being beguiled to write on what he conceives to be a 'monstrous humbug', that is, the Sind question. He adds that he will eschew Sind for a time, not wanting to bore *The Times*, or Mr. Delane, or the public. He goes on:]

*Shorapoor 12th July 1847*

I suppose the country will never be given up: the time has gone by for that, and as to any consideration for the Ameers, I suppose it will be equally without a chance. I have no doubt that the constant strictures of the Press keep Sir Charles on his good behaviour. Outram has gone to Baroda which is near enough to Sind to allow of his getting better information than he did at Sattara.

The Nizam, thoroughly bullied by what took place last month, is by some accounts (English) acquiescent in all matters, and by every native account marvellously sulky and discontented, but helpless before Suraj-ool-Moolk after the armed display of protection of him by the Resident. The Bank that was to have been established has as yet come to nought, the bankers or Sahoo-kars mistrusting Mr. Dighton<sup>1</sup>. But Suraj-ool-Moolk gets money privately from them and so rubs on.

<sup>1</sup> Taylor's remarks about Dighton must, as already noted, be received with caution. Dighton was successful in 1852 in establishing a bank.

## LETTER 71

[Taylor, after indulging in 'castles in the air' about the possibility of Lord Clarendon coming to India as Governor General, with Reeve as his Private Secretary, continues.]

*Bohnal 21st August 1847*

There will be but one opinion when he [Lord Hardinge] goes, and that is regret that he does not stay. He has done his duty nobly, and well deserves any mark of favour which your Government may bestow on him.

Sir Charles Napier goes home in October or November and it is said John Sutherland<sup>1</sup> is to get Sinde. He is a fine fellow, has had vast experience and is fit to govern the Province. If the Beloches or the frontier people are ever troublesome he is likely to be as ugly a customer as Sir Charles, and there is none of that contemptible striving for effect in Sutherland which has made Sir Charles notorious.

The G.G. has prohibited Mr. Dighton's association with the civil affairs of Government which is a sad slap in the face to General Fraser. Suraj-ool-Moolk holds on under the effect of the march of troops into the City and people suffer in silence who are 10 to 20 months in arrear of stipends. There is no reform of any one old abuse. Fraser wrote to me on Suraj-ool-Moolk's appointment that he *now* saw no reason why the country should not be governed every whit as well as the Company's provinces. I wonder what he thinks now.

My own matters go on very smoothly. I received the other day a very handsome commendation from the Court of Directors contained in a dispatch to the Gover-



nor General, and this encourages me to work on. But I would the work were done, and I could come to you. It is weary work alone, and longing for relief. I feel that I have several years more of it unavoidably before me.

<sup>1</sup> Lt.-Col. John Sutherland (see Letter 7, n. 6), did not succeed Sir Charles Napier in Sind. The system of military government ceased, and the Province was placed under the Bombay Government, a member of the Civil Service being appointed Commissioner.

## LETTER 72

[Taylor writes from Hyderabad, obviously revelling in the congenial society of his friends and in the interest of political intrigue and gossip by which he was surrounded. As we learn from *Story of My Life*, he was living in William Palmer's house, and we may assume that his views were coloured by association with that strong personality. This may account for Taylor's opposition to the Resident's policy, in spite of his personal liking for Fraser, and the kindness which the latter had always shown him. As Taylor admits, his own attitude towards the vexed question of how far interference was permissible to check misrule was not consistent. Nor was that of the Government of India. The difficult question is more fully discussed in the Introduction.]

*Hyderabad 25th October 1847*

I came here on business about three weeks ago. Lord Hardinge had sent orders regarding the turning out of the Ranee, the survey of the country and some other matters, and, as I wished for a change, I asked the General to allow me to come up for a while and talk over matters with him. This I have done, and we have agreed upon all points. I am also trying to get Devdroog back for the Shorapoor State, the district which was transferred to the Nizam's Government by Gresley in part payment of the Shorapoor Peshcush. The Nizam's

government people have mismanaged it sadly and it has greatly deteriorated in value, but it may be better cultivated with a little trouble and, as the recovery of the District would give me immensely more influence and be an act of justice to Shorapoor, I trust I shall be successful. The Minister Suraj-ool-Moolk appears agreeable about it. Still the Nizam is in so queer a humour that he might object to the most profitable and reasonable thing in the world merely because Suraj-ool-Moolk had proposed it. The latter told me, however, that His Highness had frequently expressed his disapproval of the resumption of Devdroog from Shorapoor, and thought he would be glad to see it re-transferred in accordance with the old grants from Nizamali Khan.<sup>1</sup>

I have seen much of the state of political affairs here, and never saw anything more unsatisfactory or undignified than the policy and position of the General. I marvel that the Supreme Government, which has wiggled the old gentleman and snubbed him sorely within the last 6 months, does not insist that its own policy and orders should be carried out. Lord Hardinge's policy has been strict neutrality in the Nizam's affairs, and this is in accordance with treaty. He has again and again ordered Fraser not to interfere, but to leave the Nizam and his Minister to themselves, and I understand the Court of Directors to direct the same. But the old General, much like Lord Ellenborough with the Court of Directors, is not to be deterred from following up his pet plans, supporting Suraj-ool-Moolk, and therefore disgusting the Nizam. Still not a measure of his has been carried. The proclamation regarding Arabs, for instance, and that in

regard to mortgages are not obeyed. I don't know whether they, (the General and Suraj-ool-Moolk), have come to the understanding that when one tells a plump lie, the other is bound to report it as a fact and as a proof of vigorous government to the Governor General, but there is no doubt that the most barefaced lies *are* told, and are affected to be believed. To serve his purpose, that is to get a long finger into the Nizam's pie, Fraser opposed Rambuksh, and did not honour him with the execution of his theoretical measures, continually harping on his utter incapacity both to the Supreme Government and to the Nizam till he got the man dismissed, and Suraj-ool-Moolk appointed. I fully believe that Suraj-ool-Moolk promised to do impossible things if he could be appointed, and the General was weak enough to believe him. This became known to the Nizam who hated Suraj-ool-Moolk before, and therefore, though he appointed him on the Resident's nomination, started by utter indifference and jealousy, which has increased to a sort of monomaniacal dislike.

What comes of all this? Nothing but bad feeling, intrigue and embarrassment. Suraj-ool-Moolk does not want for sharpness, but his is that low order of intellect common among Mahomedans, which debars him from any perception of his position, or induces him to give an insane confidence to the support of the Resident. Fraser says 'mine is the only honest policy—I want to retrieve the Government, to prevent its slipping from under the Nizam. I want to keep our Government at a distance for its policy is an insidious one, as allowing the Nizam and his Govt. to go to the devil without warning or

prevention.' This has a sort of plausibility about it, but is indefensible, for Government is bound by treaties not to interfere, and is inclined to observe the spirit of the Treaty rigidly. I have little doubt, from the want of ability in the conductors of the Government, and in its want of vitality, that it will eventually stop. But I think that the General's policy is more surely hurrying it on to a stoppage than any other, for the Nizam is discontented; his discontent affects the Minister's credit, and the Minister, were he an angel, could do nothing alone to retrieve the affairs which any man of average ability and in the Nizam's confidence, could do, not immediately, perhaps, but gradually to such an extent as would keep the State vessel afloat for many a year to come. I know that a party in the Court, I suspect Oliphant, Moore<sup>2</sup> and some others, are upholding the meddling line of policy, and I believe Mr. Dighton, who has been utterly discountenanced, wishes to continue it because he may perhaps regain his position as Superintendent of one half, or one-third at least, of the Nizam's revenue collections, but it is so preposterous that I must look to you to advocate that freedom of action to the Nizam which ought to exist by our guarantee. However stupid the Nizam may be, he is yet lord and master, and we have no business to dragoon him, either through the Resident, or Suraj-ool-Moolk. We could only be justified in interference by experiencing an extreme state of anarchy causing disturbances on the frontier, or by the dread of any large body of troops here, or by a declared bankruptcy. None of these exist. The country is quiet, though badly governed. There is no mutinous army except what is made

so by being starved and denied pay by Suraj-ool-Moolk. The Arabs are a consideration but they are nothing new and might be removed if their claims could be settled. I confess to have misunderstood the subject somewhat before, because I thought we had, I argued from what was going on, a right of dictation to some extent, but we have absolutely *none*. I know interference is inevitable in the end, but it will be more accordant with the feelings of the Natives, and with our stipulations and treaties, not to meddle with the Nizam till he asks us to do so, than to vex him, disarrange the current of his affairs and continue the thankless offices we are engaged in. Please therefore do what you can. In spite of what I have written politically, I have a great affection for the General, who is very kind and shows attachment. I have said all I could and the old man sees how hollow and worthless Suraj-ool-Moolk is. If there was interference for good, that is, authorised and avowed interference, the General could carry out his theories because he would have European officers to do his work for him, and he has great ability to arrange plans of improvement. But he is fighting the wind just now and his ideas are too Quixotic. I dread that Lord Hardinge, or the Court, may quarrel outright with him, and remove him which I would be very sorry to see, but, faith, if he won't obey orders, he will get himself into a scrape and will assuredly deserve whatever he may get. Please think about the matter and mention the subject generally to those whom it may interest.

I shall go back to Shorapoor soon.

<sup>1</sup> Nizam Ali Khan. Nizam of Hyderabad from 1761 till 1803.

<sup>2</sup> It is significant that the two persons whom Taylor mentions as supporting Fraser's policy, Majors Oliphant (see Letter 42, n. 1) and Moore were the only members of the Court of Directors with personal knowledge of Hyderabad affairs. They had both served for many years in the Nizam's army, and Moore had been for a long period Military Secretary at the Residency.

## LETTER 73

*Hyderabad 9th November 1847*

There is no improvement and in some matters retrogression, as the Minister's credit dwindles away, and some people have extorted from him promises which he will be unable to fulfil. For instance a Pattan, whose claims were under investigation walked into his audience room the other day with several others and swore he wouldn't move till he got orders for the whole of his claim, 16 lakhs, threatening violence if he did not get them. An Arab Jemadar marched in with 400 men with lighted matches and loaded guns and asked for 2 lakhs of rupees, which was also promised. The General's plans and reforms are of no use—and he is in low spirits and at his wits' end. All you can do, if you will help this matter and us, that is, Malcolm and me who agree perfectly, is to preach non-interference, for we have no business to interfere and it does no end of mischief, as is exemplified here. Reserve all strength for the time when it is needed, and then when sought by this embarrassed State, it will be taken thankfully and given effectually.

Malcolm received an express last night from the Govr. General, giving him the Political Agency of Joudpoor. It is Rs. 2,000 a month and he will beat his own drum, which is better than playing 2nd fiddle to Fraser. I am

sorry Malcolm<sup>1</sup> goes for he is a true fellow and has been a great help to me, but his foot is in the stirrup now.

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm's death, already referred to in Letter 21, n. 1, doubtless prevented his reaching the high place which Taylor anticipated for him.

## LETTER 74

[In the *Story of My Life* Taylor tells us that his illness was due to internal complaints caused or aggravated by his horse falling under him. The delay was unfortunate as the Rani, mother of the boy Raja of Shorapur, made the most of the opportunity to work up mischief.]

*Hyderabad 9th January 1848*

I am still here, detained under the doctor's hands, who, skilful and anxious as he is to relieve me, cannot effect as speedy a cure as I or he could wish. Maclean<sup>1</sup> has every confidence that he will effect a complete cure but I fear much more time will be required, and on many accounts I am most anxious to be back at Shorapur.

Here matters are pretty much as they were, though we had a narrow escape of much tumult and bloodshed when the Soonee and Sheah<sup>2</sup> row took place which the Nizam's firmness alone put down. But for him the City would have been deluged with Sheah blood. There is greater tightness than ever in the Exchequer. Last month General Fraser was obliged to advance money to pay the regular Contingent, and I suspect there is no money in the Treasury, and no assets available that I can hear of. This is but the beginning of further advances by the Company's Government to which the Nizam's Government now owes about 35 lakhs of Rupees. We have to see

what Lord Dalhousie does, or the turn of his policy. Fraser expects and wishes for a partial interference; I tell him it will be whole or none. He would like the office of suggestor and adviser without the responsibility of the execution of government, and this is, I think, about the last task that will be imposed upon him by the Supreme Government. He is dying to hear what the policy will be, and constantly asks me whether I have heard anything. You are the only person who could give me any information, and, whether for or against his policy, I should be thankful of any. If for, it would encourage him to proceed; if against, it might get him out of a scrape; and I have so much affection for the old gentleman that I would prevent trouble to him if I could. Lord Dalhousie<sup>3</sup> must be on the point of arrival in Calcutta, and, as soon as is possible, he will send the usual letter announcing his arrival to the Nizam. This may possibly be presented by the Resident and the visit, if it is made, may lead to an *Éclaircissement* on various matters. The Nizam's aversion to his Minister, for example, and the consequent want of confidence displayed by the monied and other interests in the Government.; the Nizam's freedom of choice of a Minister and many other subjects. At present the Resident cannot seek the Nizam with any ground of discussion. The Nizam will not seek the Resident for he fears to be upbraided with the non support of Suraj-ool-Moolk, and that this man may even more strongly be forced upon him. I hardly know whether I make you comprehend the state of affairs: but, if you can, you will see that nothing could be more embarrassing or unsatisfactory to all parties here, and to our own



Government, which I sincerely believe wishes the Nizam to be uncontrolled and independent. The debts of the State are not such as would cause bankruptcy if there were any public confidence.

<sup>1</sup> William Campbell Maclean (1811-98), later Surgeon-General and C.B., at this time Residency Surgeon at Hyderabad. His book, *Memories of a Long Life* (1885), gives some interesting facts about the State.

<sup>2</sup> The two great divisions of the Mohammedans in India, the Sunnis and Shias. The latter, though numerically much the smaller party, have always been strong in the great cities of Lucknow and Hyderabad.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Dalhousie landed in Calcutta on 12 January 1848.

## LETTERS 75 AND 76

[Taylor had been having more trouble than would appear from his previous letters with the dissolute Rani, and recounts with zest the action which he took to put into effect Lord Hardinge's permission to remove her. At the end of his second letter his reference to Reeve's letter indicates that the very natural view had been taken in *The Times* that the welfare of the people of Hyderabad should be considered as well as the theoretical propriety of interference. It is curious that Taylor, while supporting the principle of non-interference, should advocate the system at Lahore which was one of entire control by the British representative.

There seems some *naïveté* in his request to Reeve to ascertain the probable policy of the Government, and to inform Taylor of it, so that the latter could influence his official superior, the Resident, in the right direction.]

### LETTER 75

*Shorapoor 9th February 1848*

I have just finished a little bit of quiet revolution, as I may call it, in this little State. It was this wise. I had received orders from the Supreme Government to turn out the Ranee, but she had got so strong a party together that I knew it would be a ticklish matter, and the

chances were in favour of a serious rising on her behalf, as she had corrupted all the Bedurs of the State. This I had prepared the Resident for, and, as the little Rajah had also written urgently to me to come down as he was in dread of his life, I received permission to call up the Lingsoogoor and Goolburga forces, altogether about 800 men, Cavalry and Infantry with two guns to hold on with till more could come to my aid. The Ranee was to be told she was to go to Mysore, directly I arrived. With these instructions, I reached this on the 3rd, and found that there were not more than 200 men in the place on whom I could depend. However these were firm and were stout fellows on whom the little Rajah had every dependence. I had to prepare these. They were instructed to assemble quietly at the Palace early next morning; this was told to their two officers only, and, as my letter to the Ranee was taken in to her, to occupy the outer court of the palace and cut off the Ranee and her paramour from the Rajah, as also to prevent them getting out to the Bedurs outside. Early therefore my letter went, and the men slipped into their places and were so strongly posted that it would have taken a deal to turn them out. Directly the Ranee's party heard what had been done, they assembled to the amount of 5 or 600 men and were very violent. They were baffled, however, and though many urged an attack on the palace, yet none was made. These Bedurs can always assemble to the amount of 1,500 men in a couple of hours, and this number could be doubled in 24 hours, and this made me anxious. I had about 150 men with me, and could have defended myself, but the town and perhaps the Treasury

could have been plundered. All day long the assembly continued to increase and in the evening was about 800 strong, very violent and utterly regardless of my warning messages to disperse. They treated messages from the Rajah with derision, as the Ranee was openly proclaimed. I started expresses for the troops and prepared my own hill against an openly threatened attack. About 6 o'clock in the evening 200 men came in from a fort in the country to reinforce the Palace guard, and this made it secure. Hearing of the reinforcement, the insurgent Bedurs left the post they had taken up and separated into two parties, one of 500 men going to a strong high hill, and the other to occupy a gate of the town on my flank. Their object was to attack me at night with the party on the hill, those at the gate to prevent my egress if I retreated. They would have got the worst of it if they had come at me, for I was very strong and had got together 200 men by evening, 150 of whom were Regulars. That night of the 4th was an anxious one, but it passed away quietly. All day on the 5th the Bedurs continued in arms, but late in the afternoon it was known that the Lingsoogoor regiment had crossed the Kistnah and was coming on. This had a sensible effect on the party which gradually frittered away till about 150 men were left, who sent to me about 6 p.m. for terms. I would give them none but unconditional surrender and their lives. I had proclaimed 19 of the ringleaders to be rebels and these knew it was of no use to bolt so finally 16 of them came in and laid down their swords. The night passed quietly and in the morning the Ranee's paramour and four others were secured too. *Now* my lady said she

would go, but there was no hurry and she was quite safe in the Palace. The 1st Regiment came in about 8 o'clock, two companies from Muktul, 60 miles in 25 hours, half of it under a hot sun, about 11, and the guns in the evening. However, all was done before any one came in.

My first express to Hyderabad has put Fraser on the move for he writes to me to hold on with the troops I have till he can get to me, and not to attack the Bedurs. I expect him tomorrow, and am glad he is coming as he has long been wishing to see Shorapoor. Possibly my subsequent letters may induce him to turn back, though the old man can 'go it' like a good one if he pleases. The Bedurs of the country have made no sign. But if, as they had arranged, they could have carried off the Ranee and her man, and the Rajah, they would have kicked up a nice shindy. Happily there has not been a drop of blood spilt. I shall send a squadron of cavalry with the lady to Bel-lary whence she will go to Bangalore. She will be a good riddance and, after she is gone, we may hope for some quiet and that there will be no more of the nonsense there has been for years past, I having been helpless in regard to the combinations among these people, though longing to break them up and advising it to be done constantly.

I am glad to hear that Fk. Courtenay<sup>1</sup> is the Private Secretary, and I hope he will not forget me. I don't like to jog his memory, and if you can, or his sister would, I should be much obliged.

<sup>1</sup> Courtenay, F. Lord Dalhousie's Private Secretary.

## LETTER 76

*Shorapoor 22nd February 1848*

You will like to know the sequel to the matters I told you of in my last. Fraser had not received my letter informing him that the insurgents' leaders had laid down their arms. Even if he had, I doubt whether he would have stayed at Hyderabad, so impetuous is the old man. He came on the morning of the 11th and had the satisfaction to know the lady was safe beyond the gates of the town by 5 o'clock in the evening. With the Ranee and her paramour in my hands, and as the other leaders, with the exception of two who had bolted, had laid down their arms and were in confinement, there was no chance of a row. I took Fraser through a street of the Bedurs, many of whom had been in arms a few days before, and who made him most lowly and reverential obeisance. I am glad he came: he saw the place which it is impossible to make any one understand; he saw the Raja in whom he took a strong interest, and was very affable to everybody. His coming had, and will have, a good moral effect and he went away quite satisfied with all that had been done, and as thankful, I believe, as I was that we had not a hot weather campaign before us, with 8 or 10,000 Bedurs among the hills and rocks, plundering the country and of course never showing their faces. I have received an unlimited amount of *kudos*, and shall enclose for your information what he has written to me officially on the subject<sup>1</sup>.

There was no sensation when the lady was escorted out of the town by a squadron of cavalry, except a howl

set up by a few of her slave girls. She would not see her son, nor her son her, so that spared a scene. I was with her all day arranging her affairs and handed her into her palankeen—Poor soul, she was crying bitterly then, having held up to the last. A troop of cavalry closed about her palankeen as she got outside the Palace gate and the squadron with their lance pennons waving, looked gallant and picturesque as they moved down the steep road.

Thank you much for your letter. No, I wish no harm to the old General, and tried hard to get him out of the messes which that little beast Dighton, to serve his own money-getting purposes, had led him into. But the *Times* is right. We should not affect political prudery in a case like the Nizam's, when the interests of a people are at stake and therefore I hope to see a second Lahore administration at Hyderabad, and for that Fraser would, I think, do because his understrappers would temper in execution his theoretic philanthropy. Dighton's plan has been to persuade the old man everything was being done when nothing was even attempted. The kindest thing you can do is to let me know, if Lewis<sup>2</sup> will tell you, what course of policy is to be pursued at Hyderabad, and on this information I can guide the old gentleman either to persevere if there is to be control, or to keep himself out of scrapes, and not embarrass the Government if there is to be none. I am alone again and shall go out into the District as soon as I can.

<sup>1</sup> Fraser's letter, very complimentary to Taylor, will be found at p. 248 of *Story of My Life*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir George Cornwall Lewis (1806-63), at this time secretary of the Board of Control.

## LETTER 77

[General Fraser was obliged 'for the first time in fifty years' service', to apply for leave, the cause being the ill health of his unmarried daughter. He left Hyderabad on 3 March 1848, the officer officiating for him being Colonel John Low. The latter was, as Taylor says, an officer of great political experience, who had been an assistant of Sir John Malcolm. With reference to Taylor's attacks on Fraser's support of Suraj-ul-Mulk, it is fair to point out that, though Low found much that was 'painful' in the condition of affairs in the Hyderabad State, he followed the policy of supporting Suraj-ul-Mulk. This was also the policy of the Court of Directors. Low, writing to Fraser on 13 September 1848, after the latter had returned to Hyderabad, says that the Governor-General had shown him the Court's dispatch, directing him to give 'decided support' to Suraj-ul-Mulk.]

*Camp Jewingee 9th March 1848*

All is quiet in my district. The whole body of the Bedurs visited me some days ago and gave in an agreement signed by the heads of their body in regard to several points of their future conduct.

Fraser left Hyderabad on the 3rd. Newbold<sup>1</sup> has charge of the Residency, but only till Colonel Low<sup>2</sup> arrives in a few days. Fraser took no leave of the Nizam, and the Nizam did not ask to see him although the letter from the Governor General announcing his arrival was at the Residency and it is usual to make a State occasion of its arrival. This shews no friendly feeling on the Nizam's part. I cannot account for Fraser's turns of mind at all. At Shorapoor he was open mouthed against Suraj-ool-Moolk, but directly he got back again, though he was only absent a week, he turns to S. O. M. more fondly than ever.

I thought the old man had become quiet and had given

up his party predilections and was content to watch. But there is no trusting him and I only fear he may have again given pledges to Suraj-ool-Moolk of that support of him which is in the last degree offensive to the Nizam, and answers no good whatever.

Low is a steady good man of the Sir J. Malcolm school. This is at least his reputation. As he must have had more experience of Natives and Native Courts than Fraser I have no doubt he will give his impressions of this one freely to Lord Dalhousie. Malcolm,<sup>3</sup> who was at Calcutta some days, was, I understand, picked clean of information, and, as he went there almost asking to be asked, I suppose he gave full measure.

I marvel that the Home Government is silent on this subject. For the last three years there has been perpetual squabbling and neither have Hardinge's orders been obeyed, nor has Fraser carried his own points, nor the Nizam his, nor, for the matter of that, the Minister his. Why the Supreme Government does not give a downright order and see it executed, be it what it may, I cannot imagine.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Thomas John Newbold (1807-50), of the Madras army, F.R.S., Assistant Resident at Hyderabad.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Low (1788-1880), G.C.S.I., K.C.B.

<sup>3</sup> This was, of course, Major D. A. Malcolm, see Letter 21, n. 1.

## LETTER 78

[Taylor is more taken up with the Revolution in France than with Indian affairs; but his comments need not be reproduced. The Management of *The Times* by attending to his protest about his inadequate remuneration had shown their wish for a continuance of his letters. The anticipated visit of General Fraser to Calcutta



did not take place. The postscript and sketch refer to Sir Charles Napier's well-known disregard of dressiness.]

*Camp Jewingee 9th April 1848*

I am much obliged to Mr. Delane for the £100. I see it has been paid into my Father's a/c at Praed's which is all right. I have little to send you in the way of news from here now, but I will manage to keep up the ball, writing twice a month if possible, once *certainly*. I cannot always write on the Nizam's affairs; they do not progress either to worse or better and will, I conclude, remain for many a day yet unaltered, without the Court of Directors, as the 5 per cent loan is at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent discount, insists upon H.H. borrowing no more money and paying what he has borrowed which may be 40 lakhs or thereabouts. General Fraser is going to Calcutta, so Mrs. F. writes to me, and so I advised him to do; and I hope when there, he will come to a good understanding with Lord Dalhousie. His Lordship will be struck with him, as every one is, and they will either become great friends or great enemies. If one could by any means give F. a nose like Lord Brougham's, his turns down not up, the other features and colour are the same, the same eyes and mouth, the same tall thin figure, much the same sort of acquirement and disposition.

I am vain enough to enclose you copies of the reply to the correspondence and transaction in regard to the Ranee's removal. The letter from the Sec. conveying the G.G. in C's approbation is, as you may conceive, most encouraging to me and, coming from the new G.G., most peculiarly so. My little realm is perfectly quiet, and all people most thankful, especially the Bedurs, that they



have escaped a serious scrape into which many were being rapidly drawn. There is no accounting for the infatuation of such people as Ranees and their paramours, except in comparison of them with other royal freaks in your more civilized world.

I am *at last* become enough important to be abused by a public Newspaper! The Calcutta *Englishman* has taken me up as a rather horrible monster, being under some dismal infatuation by a correspondent from the Dekhan. Who he is I have not the most remote idea, nor do I care.

[*Enclosing sketch*]

I thought I had lost this, but as it happened to be in the very envelope I had taken up to put my note to you in, I may as well send it. It is Sir Chas. Napier, G.C.B. etc. in the dress he wore at the celebrated assembly of the Sindian chiefs. Sketched (i.e. the original from which I traced it most carefully) at Hyderabad by a member of his staff. Malcolm had the

original to which was appended a certificate signed by many members of the Sinde Staff, that it was exact and no caricature.

The dress is a dirty old flannel jacket, trousers of coarse white cloth not over clean, a hunting cap, no braces. One man had added 'Correct but the stockings are not shown down at heel, as they ought to have been'!

## L E T T E R 79

[Taylor, still taken up with the French Revolution, alludes only to Fraser's failure to get the Governor-General to assist him in the removal of the disturbing foreign elements at Hyderabad. These were admittedly the cause of so much crime and disorder that greater sympathy might have been expected from Taylor with Fraser's aims, however difficult their execution would have been.]

*Camp at Jewingee 24th April 1848*

I am glad to tell you that I had a very kind note from F. Courtenay, to whom I had written a short note of recognition. He proffers every service in his power, and begs I will let him know how he can help me in any way. He says he had great pleasure in first seeing my name mentioned in the country in terms of approbation by the G.G. and that the G.G. 'hopes this has been conveyed to me officially in as marked terms as he himself employed' all of which has, as I told you, been accomplished. Courtenay cannot help me in any way that I know of; but it is pleasant to have one near the G.G. who knows one, and who may be able to help in case of necessity.

In regard to Hyderabad, I suspect Ld. Dalhousie's policy is entirely non interferent, and that his instructions to Colonel Low have been in consonance with these

views. I gather this from a couple of letters (official) which I received yesterday from Col. L. in reply to one of mine in which I had proposed some measures for the suppression of a gang or rather a series of gangs of mounted marauders who have been the terror and annoyance of the S.W. Frontier of the Nizam's country these many years, and who plunder on the highways both in it and in the Coy's country. The gist of this letter is that the Nizam is jealous of any interference, and that the Govt. of India do not wish it. I am authorized to do what I can securely, but one can do but little when one's hands are tied, and one's authority circumscribed. This however is not my fault but theirs who direct, and my 'petit possible' has been in some degree successful of late in the recovery of stolen property and apprehension of part of a notorious gang of these scoundrels.

Mr. Clerk<sup>1</sup> wrote to Genl. Fraser that there was no Govt. on the S.W. Frontier of the Nizam's country and that he received many complaints. He was quite right, but, if the Nizam is too jealous to allow his own officers to assist in keeping the peace, and chooses to take the consequences of the aggressions of his subjects upon those of the Company, he will only have himself to thank for the consequences.

Another letter (copy) has been sent for my information, why, I don't know, as I have no concern with it and have no desire to entertain 'foreign mercenaries'. Fraser, it appears, wrote in December last to the G. of India to have all foreign mercenaries *expelled* from the Nizam's country. The G.G. in C. in reply says, that it wd. doubtless be very desirable to expel these people, if it

could be effected by satisfying their claims in the first instance and there was any way of preventing their return, but, as F. had failed in repeated attempts, or only succeeded to a very limited extent, he, the G.G. in C., directs him to abstain for the future from any interference to effect this object, and here is the pithy conclusion, 'being of opinion that a scheme, the accomplishment of which mainly depends on the success of the first experiments, and which has proved so abortive in those already made, is not likely, when attempted on the extended scale originally contemplated, to be attended with more satisfactory results'.

Fraser deserves this rebuff, for he would write against conviction, I think, certainly against the result of daily experience of the inability of the Nizam's Govt., to satisfy the demands of 500 Affghans. I believe he wanted the thing to be done *Coûte que coûte*, pay or no pay; he discussed the matter over and over again with me, and said it must be done to save the State, and I as often told him it never would, we should get nothing but broken heads by the attempt, certainly neither honour nor profit, without we took the country.

From these two letters one may judge that Genl. F.'s policy and conduct was wrong. If interference even to repress marauding on the frontier is impossible, as disallowed by the G. of I. and displeasing to the Nizam, how greatly must F. have erred in trying all he could to guide and control the Minister and to reform all the affairs of State after his own fashion! And if his plan of expelling the mercenaries is so coolly disposed of, he can have little hope of any thing further. I suppose from this that what

Fraser used to call the insidious policy of Govt., that is strict non-interference, will be pursued, and the Nizam's Govt. be allowed to grind on in increasing embarrassment till the mill stops for good.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Clerk was now Governor of Bombay.

## LETTER 80

[Taylor begins this letter with some perturbation about the disorders in France and the Chartist agitation in England. It is, he remarks, 'a fearful time for you all, the struggle, as it appears to me, of brute force and poverty against intelligence and wealth'. He has, however, something of importance in India to write about. The Naib or Deputy-Governor of Multan in the southern Punjab, Mulraj, had resigned. The Indian official appointed to replace him had reached Multan with two British officers, Mr. Vans Agnew of the Civil Service, and Lieutenant W. A. Anderson. On 20 April the two British officers were murdered by the soldiers of Mulraj, who went into open rebellion. The Commander-in-Chief refused to allow British troops to move in the extreme heat then prevailing and in this he was supported by the Governor-General. As usual, Taylor at a distance was inclined to be censorious.]

*Shorapoor 3rd June 1848*

But I have no business with your politics; we are likely in this Mooltan matter to have some of our own again and Indian news again to rise in interest. I do not think, as I have written last mail and this to the T., that our head politicals are ever enough on their guard. To me, who have watched the dodges of Native rulers of provinces for many a day, the whole thing was transparent from the first and why those two poor lads<sup>1</sup> were sent on such an errand as they were, passes my comprehension. How easy would it have been to have settled all accounts and all transfers at Lahore, and how much more satis-

factory by a simple and usual move in the game of *Native* politics to have given Moolraj a check at a distance which would have forced him to open his game to his adversaries! Currie<sup>2</sup> has done well however in hanging the Ranee's Moonshee, and *General* Khan Singh, and there are few natives who have not a most wholesome dread of the gallows. I take it this act will save a world of trouble and, without Moolraj can get his people to fight it out, and so wait till our troops can move, the probability is that, when the news of the plot being known, and the execution of the two conspirators following, reaches Mooltan, the Dewan will bolt, and his people also in to the hills across the Indus; he has no other place of refuge, and if young Edwardes<sup>3</sup> has been doing his work well there, and has conciliated the tribes on the Indus, Moolraj may find that no place of refuge. The thought of this may make him fight, and I hope the end of this will be that he will be taken and hanged. There will no doubt be a cry out that Lord Hardinge had no business to put matters on their present footing in the Punjab and that it ought to have been taken. I don't say that it ought not; but, as it was not, this was the only thing else that could have been done, and his concentration of troops about the Punjab proves that he must have thought the chances of an *émeute* probable, and so provided against them. They say Ld. Dalhousie goes up the country directly the rains are over, and that till then nothing was to be done; but if Currie had the power (he may not have had it) he ought to have moved an additional Brigade or two on Lahore, and got together from Ferozepoor Meerut and Sindh 10,000 men for Mooltan which

would have kicked Moolraj and his rabble out of it in the course of a month. They have water communication even for heavy ordnance, and, to my thinking, ought not to have waited for a day.

I hope they will get to the bottom of the plot. Currie did so of one and is keen enough to do so of this. I don't see why they shouldn't hang the Ranee, but, as they won't, they had better send her to Calcutta, or to England which would be much better, or even to New South Wales. One Royal plotter sent to the Kala Panee or Black Water, otherwise transported, would have a great effect; it would be something new at all events. Apropos of Ranees, mine is gone to Bangalore, but before she left Bellary I heard she had contrived to seduce a good looking fellow who, as one of the magistrate's running messengers or chaprassees, had been set with others to watch her and attend to her wants. This fellow was suspected and watched, followed and caught in *flagrante delicto* with the lady. For this he got 6 dozen well laid on and was put in irons, and the lady's departure rather hastened. I hear she was not allowed a palankeen, but was obliged to travel in a bullock cart, which must have offended her mightily. I have written to Mellor the magistrate to know the truth; but it is an exceedingly probable story.

There is nothing new at Hyderabad, no approach to amendment in any way. I had a private letter from Col. Low the other day in which he passes from the subject of it to general notice of affairs, and seems to think them without remedy so long as there are the hindrances to reform in every shape that there are at present, and that these are not to be got over. Fraser will, I hope, go



to Calcutta, and bring some decisive orders either to interfere with a strong hand, or to stay his hand entirely even as to support of Suraj-ool-Moolk, and this would tend greatly to bring affairs to a settled point for good or evil; nothing can exceed the laxity and weakness of the present Govt.

I had applied to Low for an order about mounted robbers addressed to authorities near me. Low sends a weak proclamation, and an apology with it that, if it was stronger or anything definite expressed, it could not be executed and would only prove *more* the Minister's weakness. This needs no comment. The rains have begun and the weather is delightful. I am quite well, none the worse, but perhaps the better, of a hot season in tents. All quiet here, but there has been some speculation in my absence which I am unravelling, a disgusting job.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, of the 1st Bombay Fusiliers, was a brother-in-law of James Outram.

<sup>2</sup> Currie, later Sir Frederick, was head of the Punjab Administration during the absence of Sir Henry Lawrence. It does not appear that he hanged anyone at this stage, as Taylor believed.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to Lieutenant, later Sir Herbert, Edwardes (1819-68), who acted with great courage and resolution in this crisis.

## LETTER 81

[Taylor, writing from a distance without local knowledge, criticizes the action taken in the Punjab, and predicts future events with no great accuracy. The extreme heat of the southern Punjab and the possibility of a rising in the north made the authorities unwilling to move the European troops. They hoped that the insurrection could be put down or kept in hand by local levies. The belief was incorrect, but Taylor seems to have shared it. The untrustworthiness of the Sikh troops made the insurrection dangerous, and caused it to extend to the whole Punjab.]

The rumours about the future of the Nizam's army were doubtless increased by the letters of the acting Resident, Colonel Low, to the Indian Government, pointing out the strain which the Contingent threw upon the Nizam's finances.]

*Shorapoor July 1st 1848*

More has been made of the late Lahore matter than it deserved, but when one reads of a Brigade ordered and then countermanded, and this because it could not be made strong enough, and that Lord Gough was to take the field in the Punjab with 80,000 men *after the rains*, and when officers were all hurried down from the Hills to join their Corps, and Heaven knows how many forces were to be held in readiness to march on the shortest notice, one could not help thinking there really was something in the wind. Now Moolraj has got two troublesome forces about his ears, Edwardes with his new Beloeche levies, and the Bahawalpoor Army, when joined by a European officer, will bother Moolraj cruelly though neither, nor both together, may yet be able to take his fort. It was a pity they did not smash the fellow at once, which could very easily have been done. There was however a spice of panic at Lahore which was not proper. I hear privately that the military authorities did not pull together well, and that Currie was undecided for some time, fancying the country was going to rise, and making more of the plot, which he disbelieved when he might have put it down, than it really deserved. I think if Lawrence had been at Lahore, he would have had the thing put down at once and would never have referred to the Governor General. It would have had a great effect in the country if Mooltan had been knocked about Moolraj's

ears within a month, and this could easily have been managed if troops had moved from Ferozepoor and Sinde and simultaneously Bahawal Khan was ready with his force and any good partisan officer like Jacob<sup>1</sup> of the Sinde Horse, or any sharp political like Edwardes, would soon have roused the Mussulmans of that region, who would dearly love to have a chance on more equal terms than before with their old enemies the Sikhs. But the sending of those two poor fellows, Agnew and Anderson, literally into the lion's mouth provoked me beyond measure. It was the veriest foolhardiness—as if a fellow with 9 or 10,000 men, always of doubtful faith to his own Government, would give up his fort and country to a couple of Feringhi lads with 200 Sikhs at their heels. I think Moolraj's force will fall away from him if operations are delayed. Peshawar is firm, all the northern Punjab is quiet, and Edwardes' spirited conduct in the Derajat<sup>2</sup> and his taking Dera Ghazee Khan have done much to quiet matters.

There are strong reports of changes in this Service but I can trace them to no authentic source. We hear that the Nizam's service is too expensive to be supported any longer and certainly without it the Nizam's finances would be easier; that he will be allowed to pay a money subsidy like Nagpoor, and all the Local officers to be pensioned, Captain Commandants on £500 a year. Now I should not grumble at £500 a year when this work is finished, but I fear there is no such good luck in store as getting it. I think the Service may be reduced, I have always thought so, in point of cost, and the Cavalry, which is, however, splendid, is too costly and too good

for any but the Company. Another report is that the Infantry will be retained on the same footing as local Corps in the Company's service with one officer to command, an Adjutant, and a doctor.

Is there any truth in these rumours? Possibly you might find out from Mr. Mill.

General Fraser is most likely now in Calcutta with the Governor General and we all await the result of their consultations in regard to the State with much anxiety. Low will do nothing as mere *locum tenens* and indeed can do nothing. There is nothing new at Hyderabad, matters blunder on as before.

<sup>1</sup> John Jacob (1812-58), the famous warden of the Sind frontier.

<sup>2</sup> Derajat, an area in the south-west Punjab of which Dera Ghazi Khan is the principal town. The town was seized by Edwardes's friends, the Baluch Khosas, and the whole area was held by his levies.

## LETTER 82

[This letter reflects the interest felt throughout India in Herbert Edwardes's gallant struggle against Mulraj's forces. There were many who, like Outram and Taylor, criticized impatiently from a distance but, on the whole, the policy of Currie and the Indian Government has been regarded as justified.

Taylor's request for a regiment to be stationed at Shorapur was refused by Fraser for reasons stated in his letter of 30 August 1848 to the Governor-General (*Memoir*, p. 263). They were, the easy proximity of other garrisons, and the desire that the Bedurs should be restrained, not by military coercion but by moral influence which, in Fraser's opinion, Taylor was well qualified to exercise.]

*Shorapur July 12th 1848*

Our point of interest in India is still Mooltan, but matters look better there than when I last wrote to the *Times*. Edwardes and his Pattan levies, got up entirely

by his own spirited conduct and exertions, joined by Cortlandt,<sup>1</sup> a Sikh officer, attacked the forces of Moolraj at a place<sup>2</sup> to the westward of the Chenab, which was crossed by Edwardes and Cortlandt very gallantly in front of their enemy though their united forces were inferior and a sharp battle ensued; Moolraj's guns were taken at the point of the bayonet and luckily the force of the Nawab of Bahawalpoor came up in the rear of Moolraj's people who thereupon fled incontinently to Mooltan with a heavy loss, it is said, in killed and wounded. These united forces can hardly be less than 18 to 20,000 men, raw levies with the exception of the Sikh troops under Cortlandt, but they have done very good service, and, as Sir F. Currie has sent some intelligent officers down to them to assist in forming and directing them, it would not be surprising if in the flush of victory they were to carry Mooltan and so end this row. I had a letter from Outram a day or two ago; he tells me that he offered to proceed at once to Bahawalpoor, organize the rabble there into something like orderly troops, and with Jacob's Horse from Sindh occupy the Mooltan country till, joined by young Edwardes, he was in position to make an offensive movement against Moolraj. Currie, however, could not employ him or accept his offer, and meanwhile you see that what Outram would have done has been done by the Bahawalpoor men and Edwardes. Outram quotes from a letter of Currie's to him 'that if Moolraj should happen to meet with any success in the meantime, every Sikh soldier in the service of the Lahore Durbar would certainly rebel, and all the British officers in the districts Peshawar, Bunnoo, etc., would inevitably be murdered.

'Is it not extraordinary then', says O., 'that Sir F. being impressed with these convictions, i.e., that the least success on the part of Moolraj, a contingency always very probable when none but ill armed and half disciplined levies are opposed to him, would certainly rouse all the Sikh soldiery to mutiny—all the Punjab to rise in rebellion and all the British officers to be murdered—that he should leave anything to chance. Surely it would have been better to have risked the loss of a few men by climate by moving troops direct to Mooltan than risk such awful consequences by delay.' All this is very true. Troops ought to have gone at once, one of the movable brigades left by Lord Hardinge to have been employed. They could have slipped down the Sutleje in boats and landed at a point near Mooltan, joined Bahawal Khan's men, and doubtless carried all before them without risk of check, which would of course elate Moolraj and spread disaffection. Young Edwardes deserves the highest credit. What could have been more splendid than his conduct when, alone or nearly so, he roused the Mussulmans in the Derajat and has carried them on so handsomely to the Mooltan district? Without him and Cortlandt, I suspect Bahawal Khan's men would have got a precious thrashing which would have done a world of evil. Things of this kind ought not ever to be left to chance medley engagements, or the actions of raw levies. We have no end of troops in the N.W. and what use are they for except to move in hot weather or cool, if occasion requires?

I don't know what is doing at Hyderabad, no one writes to me, but I hear through natives that the

Minister is as good as dismissed, and that there are rumours of others' succession to office though no one has been declared yet. But any scheme for the better management of the country is as far distant as ever. Col. Low does nothing, of course, though he sees the Nizam frequently, and I conclude, if there is any change, it will occur when Fraser comes back from Calcutta where he is, I daresay, at the present time. I shall be curious to know how he gets on with Lord Dalhousie. Here all is quiet, much of the detail of the Ranee's and others' intrigues has transpired, but I don't know how the leaders in the matter are to be disposed of. I should like much if Govt. would station a regiment in the district so as to cover Shorapoor, and have submitted a semi-official memo on the subject to Genl. Fraser, who, if he have a mind, may take the sentiments of the G.G. upon it. The place is worth watching, for in the district, and in the adjacent Nizam's country, there are no end of lawless Bedurs and others who might kick up a row at any time with most perfect impunity.

<sup>1</sup> Henry van Cortlandt (1814-88), son of an English officer and an Indian mother, originally an officer of the Khalsa army, who rendered admirable service both in the Multan Campaign and in the Indian Mutiny.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to the victory won by Edwardes on 18 June at Kineri.

## LETTERS 83 AND 84

[Taylor is still principally occupied with the prospect of another Sikh war. Reeve has endorsed the letter of 25 September as 'very prophetic', but prophecy had been almost converted into reality by the date on which it was written. The fear, which the military authorities had felt from the outset, that the Sikh army would

take advantage of Mulraj's rebellion, had been realized. Chatter Singh, about the most important of the Sikh Sardars, as the father of Sher-Singh who commanded the Sikh force nominally co-operating against Mulraj, and as the prospective father-in-law of the child Maharaja, had in August created disturbances in the Hazara district, while Sher-Singh and his men refused early in September to co-operate further with the British force besieging Multan. War, therefore, became inevitable.]

#### LETTER 83

*Bohnal 22nd August 1848*

I enclose copies of a couple of letters Outram has sent me, one from Sir F. Currie at Lahore, and the other from John Sutherland, written, poor fellow, only a few days before his death. Both, I think, will interest you; Sutherland's, because an opinion, and not an isolated one, on the Lahore policy—and the other because it explains some matters in relation to the Mooltan matter, that is, the reasons why it was not put down at once. Currie writes coolly enough in regard to the probable massacre of all the officers employed on duties in the country: and it has been a happy thing for himself and the Indian Exchequer that Edwardes did gain advantages over Moolraj and was able to shut him up in Mooltan. I have a very strong suspicion that the authorities in the Punjab, and the C. in C., who has niggled about sending troops, desired really that the Khalsa troops should break out and that they should be smashed for good after the Dussera if they did. I adhere to my old opinion that it has been wrong to risk any thing in the matter. We do not want new wars, and the presence of a British force in the first instance would have prevented much delay and possibly have saved the taking of Mooltan, which will be a stiff



affair. We must now soon hear of the result, for the troops that have moved from Lahore and Ferozepore have doubtless long since arrived at Mooltan, and the heavy guns also.

There is nothing new at Hyderabad. The General has brought no instructions, and no orders come from Calcutta. Probably Government thinks that Lahore is enough to have on its hands by way of management and that there is no feasible reason for interfering with His Highness' Government. The Nizam has not seen Fraser since his return, and, it is understood, excuses himself. It was very different with Colonel Low whom he saw constantly and of whom he took a very regretful farewell.

#### LETTER 84

*Bohnal 25th September 1848*

My birthday, 40 years by the mark. I thank God for health with them, and for hope.

I am afraid Sir F. Currie's vacillation about the Mooltan matter in the first instance will entail on us another Punjab Campaign this cold weather and that is hardly an agreeable prospect as the expense will be considerable, letting alone other considerations. I have a strong idea that Mooltan will not fall easily and as Sirdar Chattr Singh has induced the Sikh regular troops stationed in the Hazareh<sup>1</sup> to revolt, and has attacked Captain Abbott<sup>2</sup> the Superintendent and forced him to retire, and it appears quite a chance whether the force at Peshawar may not rise also and join Chattr Singh, there is at present sufficiency of cause for apprehension that there may be much eventual trouble. Chattr Singh is one of

the old stiff necked Sikh Sardars who are impatient of Feringi domination, and would fain be free of it, and it is only reasonable to suppose that there must exist many sympathisers with him among the old hands in the modernized force. Lawrence<sup>3</sup> at Peshawar is in the most ticklish place and, should disaffection break out, there is nothing to prevent that large force marching on Lahore and trying its strength against us again, in the field. If Mooltan fall, it may check this spirit effectually and restore tranquillity, but just now it is the toss up of a sixpence either way and the Government in ordering up some 10,000 additional troops from the Provinces have done no more than their duty.

Who is to pay for the campaign if there be one? I conclude it will be fixed on the Sikh Government, but, as the Lahore Darbar is already heavily indebted to us, there can be only one way to have the debt liquidated and that is by resumption, or rather occupation, of more country. There is a very strong party in India in favour of absolute annexation in the event of any new campaign. It can only take place of course in the event of a rising of the Sikhs in general, and the unfaithfulness of the whole Sikh army and the Darbar. These are as yet only in the category of possibilities. It is obvious that if the Sikhs are unfaithful to their temporary covenant with us, there can be little hope of future peace when the Rajah comes to his own and can use his own powers—and equally so that we cannot be kept in a perpetual state of apprehension and watching with an army of 50 or 60,000 men on our frontier. The Sikhs must be entirely quiet and behave with good faith, or their power must be

utterly destroyed at whatever cost, even to the extension of our frontier to the Indus and the verge of Cashmere.

At Hyderabad they are in the usual mess for want of money. Fraser, while he has been prohibited from using his public influence, continues his private advocacy of Suraj-ool-Moolk though it is evident enough that he is disgusted with his incapacity. The Nizam has given the Minister two months law, of which a month or more is expired. Whether H.H. will at last be peremptory and dismiss this man, or whether Fraser's private influence will prevail to retain him, remains to be seen. Fraser is sorely disappointed that the Government, both here and in England, is against interference, even as he wished it, not actual management, but control and advice, but Government is wiser than he is, and very properly will have nothing to do avowedly with a mess to which they are not invited and which in its way would be attended with as many anxieties and responsibilities as the Punjab. Meanwhile the Government exists, that is all; the revenues are forestalled by every imaginable device, all Fraser's plans, which were really good, are thrown to the winds, and the old Chandoo Lall system of screwing wherever it is possible, and of dispossessing one man because another is ready to give advances, goes on *ad infinitum*. This would have disgusted me long ago, but Fraser in some matters has a strong stomach.

I am glad to tell you that I am all quiet and prosperous. The rains have been most favourable and the crops are magnificent. I am casting about to see how I can spend a lakh of rupees to advantage and am thinking of a great tank near Shorapoor by damming up a stream

in the valley below it. It would cost 60 or 70,000 Rs. but the return would be a noble one. I am very busy with it as all the levelling, calculations etc. falls to my share.

<sup>1</sup> Hazara. A district in the north-west Punjab.

<sup>2</sup> Abbott, afterwards Sir James (1807-96), Commissioner of Hazara, 1845-53.

<sup>3</sup> Lawrence, Major George, see Letter 63, n. 1.

## LETTER 85

[Taylor writes as if it were still possible to localize the trouble in the Punjab. On the day before this letter was written, however, the Sikh troops at Peshawar had mutinied. George Lawrence had retired to Kohat, only to be treacherously handed over to Chattar Singh. The reference to the possibility of Sir Charles Napier being sent out from England shows that the suggestion had been made before the dearly-bought victory at Chillianwala, and indicates the lack of confidence felt in Lord Gough's judgement. Taylor had clearly been heartened by Reeve's letter, and the additional payment made by *The Times*, to continue to write to that paper.]

*Bohnal October 25th 1848*

I don't know what you will say to the new Punjab War into which we seem fairly launched for a time. I was amused by the tone of an article in the *Times*, laudatory of Edwardes and justly so, but crying that the war was finished, that it was all up with Moolraj. Devil a bit of it, Mooltan is found to be far stronger than it was supposed to be and it is evidently right well defended. I do not say it will be a second Bhurtpoor matter, for that took some 35,000 men to reduce. But we can't take it till the troops come up from Sukkur, or down from Ferozepore. Whish<sup>1</sup> has no cavalry in proportion to his emergency. Else he might have cut off supplies from the North, and otherwise bother the enemy. Grain is

already very dear in the town, but it is reported that there is a six months' supply in the Fort.

Money and provisions are both reported short, and in that some seem to hope that the force may not hold together. I suspect Moolraj would not be sorry if Shere Singh were to try to join his father in the North, but he would be bothered to get there, and if the Peshawar men are held in hand by Lawrence, Chattur Singh will make very little of *his* demonstration, and even now is barely able to hold his own against the Politicals with the Hazareh Mussulmans who are joining them freely.

I suppose you in England are more likely to direct what end is to be put to this row than the Governor General, and the question of annexation or non annexation will be fought in your Cabinet, not here. I suspect there will be no annexation, on the score of treaties and so forth, but that we shall take another slice of country for the expense of the campaign and tie the hands of the Sikhs and eventually of Duleep who will be no better than any of the rest, as they ought to have been tied at first.

Lord Hardinge's was a very wise and very honest policy, but he trusted too much to moral control, and all that sort of thing which he could understand, but not Khalsajee, who no doubt put his tongue in his cheek and looked out for an opportunity to begin a new trouble. We have not had enough troops *in* the country and these being located in one place was not the way to watch the strongholds of disaffection. Usually in India a proper proportion of red coats on the spot is more effective than 10 times the number at a distance. I see the papers are speculating as to whether Napier will be sent out—I

daresay if we want the Punjab he will, not else. Lord Gough seems to be collecting an army of 70,000 men, and 20,000 are added to the army. Where is the money to come from? A five per cent loan will not fill nowadays and 6 per cent is ruination besides establishing a bad precedent. We shall, however, get over it all though the expense, the war, and the speculations attendant upon both, will flurry you a little.

I am glad the letters are still of use—I feared not, as my father wrote that he had seen none for several months. But I can easily understand that the pressing nature of your own affairs left no room for them. I did not write by every mail, being in doubt, but I shall now do so, unless my own work prevent me. The *Times* Indian articles such as I see quoted in Indian papers, are very able, certainly, and are the more free from prejudice as being the productions of a mere spectator and studier of the course of events.

What a strange year this has been, wars all over the globe, revolution conspiracy and massacre. One might be tempted to believe for the nonce in the effects of conjunctions of planets. In the Dekhan at least all is quiet, and in the Company's provinces everywhere peace prevails. There are small rows in the Nizam's Country, brought on by misgovernment and weakness, but nothing of any importance. I am very well, and longing for my visit to the Court at Lingsoogoor to be over in order to get out into the districts, where I have more peace and am better than at Shorapoor.

<sup>1</sup> General, afterwards Sir William Sampson Whish (1787–1853), in command of the force besieging Multan.

## LETTER 86

[The Commission of Inquiry into the Shorapur disturbances was to cause a good deal of trouble to Taylor. The Governor-General afterwards considered that Taylor had been misled, and Taylor, in this letter, seems to admit that he had been imposed upon. It is probable, however, that the Commission, composed of military officers, was not fully competent to decide upon the complicated papers put before it.

The decision of the Governor-General regarding the appointment of the Minister at Hyderabad is not fully stated in this letter. The Nizam, in a private interview with the Resident, had expressed his desire to remove Suraj-ul-Mulk and to replace him by Rambaksh, largely on the ground that the latter had offered to give a *nazarana*, or present, of fifty lakhs. The Governor-General regretted the Nizam's proposal, counselling the continuance of Suraj-ul-Mulk, with whose services he expressed himself satisfied, and regarding Rambaksh as entirely ineligible and incompetent. But the Governor-General did not think he would be justified in using compulsion to enforce his views. (*Memoir of General Fraser*, pp. 264-9.]

*Camp at Kukera 9th December 1848*

I have been absent at Lingsogoor helping the three gentlemen who composed a commission of enquiry in relation to sundry Shorapoor matters, to unravel and, I hope, detect as neat an example of dirty intrigue as ever fell under my cognisance, even in that most disreputable hole. I went, as I thought, as a witness to be away a week; but they would not let me come away till some truth was come at out of a heap of miserable lies and false papers, which had temporarily imposed upon me, and the evidence was in the end so clear against a Brahmin who had been the centre and executor of the whole, that he was quickly walked to the main guard of the station under fixed bayonets, where I left him. It was

somewhat strange that he should have had the Govt. post attacked on the 1st Mohorum<sup>1</sup> of last year, in the evening, and on the evening of the anniversary should have been shopped on the charge of having had it done, the interim having been filled up by ceaseless endeavours to charge and convict other parties, in which, so well had the evidence been got up, he had nearly succeeded. I hope he will be severely punished as an example to future speculators in this and other lines of rascality. It will save me much trouble hereafter.

At Hyderabad the Nizam has got his own way and under assurance from Lord Dalhousie that he is at liberty to do as he pleases, has turned Suraj-ool-Moolk out of the Ministry, to the great chagrin, as I believe and hear, of our chief, Genl. Fraser. But S.O.M. was doing no good and Fraser could do no good with him, not only because the Nizam would not support him or countenance him, but because he told lies unblushingly, and so brought Fraser into predicaments which were difficult to be got over. My marvel is that he supported him at all, but F. was somebody in the Govt. as it was, and, in the ex-Minister, could have a finger in every pie, and so bore with much that would have been intolerable to another. I don't know what will be done now; the Nizam is as wild to govern himself as Fraser is or was, and for which he is about as fit as your cook. He is paltering amidst a host of dirty intrigues, doubting everybody, asking for money and getting none, and striving to get men to take office who are to pay him for it and give engagements that they will be directed by him. In all this I think, if Fraser or the Govt. desire power and the chief control,



the Nizam is playing the best game possible to attain it for them. The Govt. may not dictate choice of a Minister, but it may withhold support, and most likely will, from any ordinary person, and this will be tantamount to an entire fall of the Nizam's pretensions or attempts to manage. In truth I do not see what any one among the Natives can do; there is not a man who will take office who is equal to the emergency, and to effect reform financial and administrative would require more talent, system, and firmness than anyone of them possesses. It is sad to see so fine a country, capable of so much real improvement and of much increase of its revenue, going from bad to worse. We have however no pretence of interfering except, as Lord Dalhousie expressly states in his letter to the Nizam last recd., in case of injury to the British territories or such misrule as will cause convulsion, when the interference will be actual and all pervading. These are not the exact words, but they are the pith of the matter. I hear the debt of the Nizam to the Company's Govt. is now with interest 63 lakhs, which is far more than ought to be allowed to remain without security, or any course of payment. It may be all very well to help a native State now and then, as many have helped us, but Lahore owes us 60 lakhs, the Nizam 63, and in looking at a million and a quarter outstanding, and our own financial difficulties, one is apt to remember the old proverb about Charity beginning at home. What are we to do with the Punjab when we reconquer it, for I suppose sooner or later we shall do that? For my own part I have argued myself into being a stout annexationist and have therefore discharged myself

in that line of policy to the T. What are we to do with it if we let the Sikhs keep it? Why but this, that year after year we shall have to watch their strength, hear of them getting up a new artillery and so have to fight our battles over again. We had better smash the whole concern at once, and for frontier enemies, we had better have the disunited Affghans and Beloches who, I suspect, are a devilish deal better subjects than the Sikhs, than have the line of the Sutlej to guard, with a heavy force perpetually on our front requiring 2/3rds of the Bengal army to keep in check. The only obstacle is the Rajah himself for we cannot call that a State which is in the condition the Punjab is, nor those friends or allies, who, like the Sikh Sirdars, are to a man, I believe, our open and undisguised or covert and treacherous enemies. I don't see why we should not govern the Punjab as cheaply as Ranjit did who amassed treasure even though he had an army of 100,000 Regular troops; and well placed, and well connected by intermediate posts, 30,000 of our own troops ought to be enough. Let no regulations, which are the curse, I believe, of our Indian administration, be introduced for the next 20 years, and we shall find, as we have found elsewhere, in Sinde, for example, that the population will be satisfied, and that there will be no nonsense of rebellions or the like, after the first two years are passed. I am afraid however that there won't be annexation, and that, having broken the Sikh army, we shall set up either a Subsidiary force or a Contingent or both, after the fashion of Hyderabad or Gwalior, than which nothing can be more mischievous or enervating, emasculating in fact, to the State, and alike mischievous to the

people. If you have any influence as to leaders on this subject, I hope the annexation line will be taken ; it will settle the question which otherwise will be an endless one, I fear, even if Gough licks the insurgents and gets his Earldom for which I suppose he is trying. I suppose Lord Dalhousie will go on to Lahore, and so settle matters, but, if the Sikhs take to the hills, there will be a long campaign in store for Lord Gough, and the hot weather will make it a troublesome one ; there are however some months to that. Mooltan is not fallen yet, and will stand a tough fight yet. We shall lose many men if there is a regular siege and storm. The Bombay people<sup>2</sup> must however be nigh hand by this time, and whether Moolraj fight or bolt or give in remains to be seen. This month and the next must necessarily be very interesting.

<sup>1</sup> The Moharram, the first month of the Moslem year, venerated by the Shias, especially in its early days, which are regarded by the Sunnis also as sacred.

<sup>2</sup> The Bombay division reached Multan on 22 December.

## LETTER 87

[Taylor's criticism of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gough, is no better than criticism of military strategy from a distance usually is. Gough, having been previously accused of rashness, is now blamed for sluggishness. He had, in fact, been seriously hampered, partly by the failure to make adequate commissariat arrangements, though a campaign had long appeared inevitable, and still more by Lord Dalhousie's positive prohibition of any advance without his prior consent.]

*Camp at Jeritgi 9th Jan. 1849*

Can this [return to England] be in four years more ?  
I hope so, nor is it far to look to. Four, three, two, one,

ah when it comes to the last may there be no delays! To endeavour to accelerate this, I made bold to ask Genl. Fraser the other day for an increase of pay; formerly 1st. class Civil Supts. in the Nizam's country used to get 2200 and 2500 rupees a month. I have more to do, and more responsibility than any Supt. ever had, and I have served long enough to entitle me to the consideration of an advance. I have also applied that my house should be purchased by the State, as it is the custom in every state in India for the Resident, Political Agent or who ever the officer accredited may be, to be furnished with a house at the expense of the state. Fraser lives in one which cost the Nizam's Govt. in old times 37 lakhs and has the use of another in the country which was bought for his own especial benefit, so he can hardly refuse to back my application. As Fraser promised me his support, I hope for the best.

You will see, though I wish it had been otherwise, that I have not been out in my speculations regarding the Punjab and that we have another expensive war on our hands which will cost some millions, they say four or five, which would not be at all wonderful. The great object should be to get it over as soon as possible; but this Lord Gough seems in no hurry to do and let Shere Singh and his guns and men slip through his fingers in the strangest and most stupid manner the other day. He has made no sort of movement since he, Lord G., crossed the Chenab, and one would think, instead of remaining idle at such a season, that he would have long ere this formed a light division, and with it under Gilbert,<sup>1</sup> who is a right good soldier, have felt his way to the N.W.,

or at least have threatened Shere Singh's left flank, and so manoeuvred him out of a position to which, like Wellington at Torres Vedras, he seems to have retreated more in triumph than with loss, though he did lose some men in the action with Thackwell,<sup>2</sup> which he fought no doubt to mask the movement of his main body. Shere Singh seems a devilish good General officer, and has evidently his wits about him. You should relieve Gough who is doing no good and having been abused for his former bulldog proceedings at Moodkee and Ferozesheher, seems shy of even attempting anything now. We don't know what the Affghans are about, but the arrival of Jubbur Khan<sup>3</sup> with a force at Peshawar is curious enough. The Sikhs might tempt the Affghans to a serious coalition by promising them Peshawar and Cashmere and the Hazareh, not to mention the Derajat, but we shall see. The only thing that would restrain such a coalition would be a wholesome dread of our power, and our perseverance; but these may not be apparent if Gough goes on as he has done. The Bombay Column, near 10,000 men, has joined Whish, and it is far from unlikely that this mail may bring you news of a decisive affair at Mooltan, or the submission of Moolraj. I have a great notion that he will try to bolt; our Artillery force is overwhelming and ought to smash everything before it and Moolraj well knows that nothing now will stop our troops.

I am provoked at this war because there need not have been any. It has grown out of Currie's gullibility and supineness, unless, as a piece of policy, he delayed to do anything till the whole of the Sikhs were committed. If these were his views, and they may have been, and

they are adopted with a view of the final annexation of the Punjab, I can understand him, otherwise he is without an excuse. Lawrence<sup>1</sup> must be at Mooltan by this, and will not delay getting to Lahore; we shall see then what we shall see; but I cannot understand how we can now stop short of annexation of the Punjab. Make Peshawar tributary and so have the Indus for our boundary and carefully guarding the main passes would make India stronger than it is. I have some suspicion that Lord Dalhousie is too much of the mere civilian and cannot understand the effects of delay or indecision in regard to Indian Pol. movements or combinations but I may do him injustice. We have yet to see results, and his opinions. I sometimes wish I was G.G. for a spell, at which you will laugh.

We have nothing very new at Hyderabad, no offl. recognition of the successor of Suraj-ool-Moolk has come from the G.Gl. but Syf Jung continues in office and uses the seal of state. The Nizam looks to his own affairs, that is, he will neither do anything himself, nor allow any one to do anything. The effect of this may be imagined. All I hope is that he may become disgusted with his own efforts and so ask Fraser to help him, and so that European officers may again be introduced. Till this is done, there will be no help for the people.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert (1785-1863), certainly one of the best soldiers of the day.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Edward Joseph Thackwell (1781-1859), who commanded the cavalry during the campaign. The action referred to was fought at Sadulapur.

<sup>3</sup> Jabbar Khan, a son of Amir Dost Mahomed.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Henry Lawrence, who had returned from leave and joined the force before Multan.

## LETTER 88

[Taylor must certainly have written in February, to mention the battle of Chillianwala, but his letter has not been preserved. He now refers to the great and final victory over the Sikhs at Goojerat on 21 February.

General Fraser did support the new Minister Shams ul Umra, but, in spite of Taylor's bright hopes, he only lasted five months before the Nizam dismissed him.]

*Hyderabad 11th March 1849*

I was ordered up here on business connected with Shorapoor affairs as there was a good deal to be said and done, and have been here for a fortnight. I have carried most of my points with General Fraser, the principal one being the settlement of a question of 5 lakhs of rupees which the Nizam's Govt. claimed from Shorapoor, I maintaining that we had already paid 166,000 more than we had any business to do. The end has been that the Nizam will not refund the money, but we got off the 8½ lakhs, which was worth coming for. I have been looking over old correspondence too and find that I can make a fair case against the Company for 50,000 Rs. a year. I don't expect to get it because the Company's Govt. will never admit that by any possibility it can have been politically unjust, but the case will stand on record, and we may get consideration in some shape or other. I cannot explain the matter to you as it would be a long story, but it is an ugly, or rather a dirty, one which our Govt. ought to redress.

I arrived on the 26th Feby. and start back to my camp today. The weather is very hot, but I make night runs, and shall be at my tents in 3 days, about 150 miles.

While here I have assisted at the installation of the new Minister Shumshool Oomra, who has after all been appointed. This man is respectable and has much weight in the State. His own affairs were in a dreadful condition at his father's death, but he retrieved them, and his sons are far above the ordinary run of Natives of Hyderabad, both as to education and information on scientific points. Genl. Fraser fought hard for Suraj-ool-Moolk, why I know not, and why he perhaps could hardly defend now, so completely does he acknowledge that S.O.M. failed, but he has been fairly beaten by the Nizam, who has, according to Treaty, carried his own points in regard to a Minister. I had never seen the Nizam before, and, having a pencil, sketched his face on my pantaloons, whence it was transferred after the durbar to Miss Fraser's album. I shall however get a copy of it. H.H. was very happy on the day in question, and all present heartily congratulated the new Minister. There was nothing remarkable in the ceremony, a crowd of courtiers, the Nizam on his musnud, which is only a raised seat on the ground covered with white muslin, all of us Feringhees on the ground looking very awkward and out of place (one can't sit cross legged in English clothes) and the old Minister giving his Nuzzur, 101 gold mohurs and being patted on the head by his master. I believe Shumshool Oomra intends to do a good deal, and he, as well as his two sons, have a character for firmness beyond ordinary.

You will see that Gough has licked the Sikhs again, and truly this time. We have not had particulars yet, nor is the dispatch published, but there has been very little loss on our part, and we have got the best part of their



guns. I dont think they will do much more. I have not been able to write to the T., my time has been so incessantly occupied, but will do so ere long.

If Fraser will only support Shumshool Oomra as he supported Suraj-ool-Moolk we shall have a fair govt. of the country; if he does not, there will be no govt. at all and matters will go from bad to worse. There is no money, and they are at their wits end to find any as there is no confidence. Another month will shew what comes of it.

### LETTER 89

[Taylor was in favour, not only of the annexation of the Punjab, but of the absorption of Native States in which there was no natural direct heir, by refusing the right to adopt an heir. This was a common opinion among British officers at the time, but it was opposed to the view of the best political officers. It was the policy followed by Lord Dalhousie, and may have been a minor pre-disposing cause for the Indian Mutiny.]

*Camp at Jewingi 28th March 1849*

You will have seen by the papers the account of the real victory of Gujrat which has put an end to the war. Lord Gough sent the best officer he had, and I suspect one of the best in India if not the very best, Sir Walter Gilbert, with a dashing force after the enemy, who though reputed to be still in force with 20 to 30 guns, and some good men of the old Khalsa and determined to hold the pass of Bakrala beyond Rhotas against all comers, were nevertheless not to be found there. Gilbert and Mackeson the P.A. pushed on, and the preliminaries having, I suspect, been made clear by Lawrence,<sup>1</sup> who was a prisoner on parole with the Sikhs but who had been allowed to go to the G.G.I. on one or two occasions, the

most of the Sirdars with 22 guns, gave themselves up to the General and P.A. on the 8th March. I dare say another post will bring particulars of the Sirdars, men, etc., who have come in, but I shall not have it in time as this is positively the last day I can detain my packet. You will all allow in England that this is a very satisfactory conclusion to this disagreeable war; one Lord Gough hardly looked for so soon, for so stout was the attitude of the Sikhs, that it is said on good authority that his Ldship looked to a second year of war. The victory of Gujrat however settled the matter, our troops had a fair field, were well disposed, went to fight with their stomachs full and fresh from a night's rest. The artillery was capitally managed, and, after a hot cannonade, the Sikhs could stand no longer. It is a pity Lord Gough got into the mess at Chillianwalla, which was owing entirely to his own loss of temper. If he had halted 3 miles short of the place, made a reconnaissance and attacked it as he did the position at Gujrat, I do not suppose he would have lost more men and officers, and would, I have little doubt, done the work. This Gujrat battle will save his reputation as a commander, and, if no one has been sent out to relieve him, they will no doubt now allow the fine old fellow to see the last of his extra year, and go home to his *otium cum dig.* The *Friend of India* said pithily that he, Lord G, gave the doubtful victory of Soodapore (Ramnugger)<sup>2</sup> to Almighty God, and the real victory of Gujrat to himself, and indeed so it appeared by the dispatches. The move of the Sikhs eastward was a false one, and has settled the war, but in any case, with the reinforcements

the C. in C. had received, Shere Singh could only have stood one more thrashing even in his own old and strong position. We should, however, have had a heavier butcher's bill, as it seems the fashion to call it, than on this last and most conclusive affair.

Now what will be done with the Punjab? Are we going to take it for good ourselves, or set the young Maharaja up with a new force of artillery, a new army etc etc, and have to do our work over again at some other period? Or are we going to make a subsidiary treaty with him or what? No one seems to know anything yet, and guesses are wide of the mark, but Lord Dalhousie goes on to Lahore, I dare say is there now, and of course all will be settled. One argument before against taking the country was the difficulty of conquering it entirely and of breaking down the power of the Khalsa and the Sirdars; both however are pretty well done for now. Khalsajee must be tired of losing guns and getting thrashed, and the Sirdars who have joined this movement will doubtless be sent out of the country or held to good conduct in heavy securities. There is no one left to resist and therefore the country must be considered conquered as completely as any portion of British India. But there is no use discussing the matter. Of course the Affghans will be driven out of the Peshawar district, if indeed they dare to abide Gilbert's force, which is 5000 Europeans and 12000 natives with 40 guns, and I conclude we shall keep troops there as our frontier post, with intermediate stations between it and Lahore of which Wazeerabad is to be one. With Mooltan in the south and a brigade to the west on or near the Indus, we

should have a stronger, better defined, and more advantageous frontier for India than we have ever had before. Clive said when he took Chandernagore, 'we cannot stop here'. We are now fairly at the Indus and with that as his frontier Lord Dalhousie may yet find time for those improvements of the country of which he is known to be a zealous advocate. We have taken leave of war I think for many a day. Who is there left to fight? We are indeed masters of India, and I would fain see it put to the proof that it could be better and more cheaply governed by one power than as it has been. I would not restore the Punjab to independence; and, though I would respect old treaties as far as they exist, yet I would recognize no right to adoption of heirs in the native states and, as the present rulers died without direct issue, I would declare states to have escheated to the Supreme power as Sattara has done. Frere,<sup>3</sup> the Resident there, wrote to me the other day that he was sorry it had been decided it was to be incorporated with our own territory but I think Govt. has been quite right and Lord Ellenborough never made a falser move than when he would not have Gwalior when it was without an heir.

I hear my child Ally is very lovable, with promise of a fine person, has good eyes, but otherwise is not remarkable for good looks. I do not hear that she is clever, but she writes very clearly, and well and not at all like a child. I dare say as with her mother (at least I will hope so) that there will be more found beneath the surface than upon it.

I have not been sent for to Lingsoooor; the Court have written to Fraser, as I hoped they would in justice to me,

that they have already given their opinion. I told him at Hyderabad it was no use referring to the Court again; the men who composed it cannot change and, without he ordered a new trial, there was no use in going further. I have not heard of the matter since their reference.

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence. This was Major George; see Letter 63.

<sup>2</sup> Ramnugger, not an altogether successful action, fought on 22 November 1848.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Bartle Frere (1815-84), afterwards Governor of Bombay and of Cape Colony.

## LETTER 90

[Taylor sums up the Punjab situation very fairly. He writes from Lingsugur where the interminable inquiry into the Shorapur disturbance was still going on. The Commission's report was unsatisfactory in the view of Taylor, and also of the Resident, but Taylor recognized that the efforts of Fraser to get the Commission to revise its finding would be futile.

Taylor was naturally interested in Louis Napoleon's rise to power in France, as he had met him frequently in London. (*Story of My Life*, pp. 128, 129.)]

*Lingsoogoor 12th April 1849*

I am rather amused at the fidget which the battle of Chilianwalla seems to have put you all in in England. I expected some amount of alarm because of all people in the world I believe that we croak the soonest, but that in that one battle there should be anything that could menace India in the stability of our position, was a length to which I could hardly believe your public could be brought. It was a stupid blundering affair, and the worst feature in it that there was unsteadiness among the troops. As Gough had led them before at untoward hours of the day into action he did on this occasion also, and the forfeit was heavy, but that there was anything

to despair about I denied then and deny now. I believe on all occasions that England may have the fullest confidence in our supremacy here, and it is now arrived at a point that nothing can shake or disturb it. The sending out Napier in such a hurry I think expresses more fright than need have been for Lord Gough was so intensely bullied about Chillianwalla by the Press and the view of the whole army, that he was forced to be cautious, and as the sequel proved had really gained experience. We now see a little behind the scene, and know that, as the Affghans got Peshawar, they were much inclined to shew a cold shoulder to the Sikhs, and that after Chillianwalla the Sikhs could not get into Peshawar district. This accounts for Shere Singh's move to Gujrat which decided the campaign. Gough had a fair field, took time, and surveyed their position, got up his troops, and gained a complete victory, as he would have done at Chillianwalla if he had adopted the same plan, though it would have been a bloodier one. There was undoubtedly much reason for temporary apprehension that the campaign would be prolonged just after the Ramnugger affair and even after Chillianwalla. No one knew what magazines the Sikhs had formed, and many were presumed; but reflection might have given assurance that they could not have been very formidable.

Powder may be made anywhere but shot cannot and 50 to 60000 men are not maintained even by rations for nothing, and the private hoards of the Sikhs Sirdars could have done little in a month or two more.

Enough, and thank God for it that it is all over; that our loss in the whole campaign, even including Mooltan,

was not more than a sharp general action would have given if hotly contested (and those who knew the Sikhs must have felt that loss must needs be heavy), that Gilbert has pursued the Affghans to Jumrood, and that the people of Peshawar welcomed our men, as the French did at Toulouse at the end of the war, by showering flowers at them as they passed through the streets. All this is subject of profound congratulation and gives hope of peace for the future nor has Lord Dalhousie faltered with the crisis. You will see, as I have enclosed it with a short letter to the T., how he has annexed the Punjab to British India, and I am confident in doing so has done the wisest act which India has seen since the times of Hastings and Wellesley. If Napier comes in he is just the man to look after the consolidation of the conquest and to put down with an iron hand any symptoms of evil. I have no doubt in my mind, as well from the disposition of the people as from the completeness of the conquest, that the Punjab will in a year or less be as quiet and as easily governed as Sinde is and they will have the sense not to bother the people *too* soon with regulations and other legislative encumbrances upon administration. Some very able men, I suspect, have been appointed and I have no fear for the result in any way. I suppose we shall want more troops but with a revenue of a million and a half clear we can afford a good many. Madras does not want so many Regts. as it has, Bombay may be enlarged and Bengal also, in proportion to actual necessity. If our troops could be withdrawn in time of war, and with unsettled reports flying all over India as they have been, from the provinces, we can have little

fear of the tranquillity of India now. Who is there left to fight? The Nepalese assuredly will not try us now, and there is not a soul in power who has even a few thousand men who could think of meeting us. Every one will be glad the matter is settled. George Thompson and Co. may take up Dhuleep and his mother as they did the Rajah of Sattara, but its no use. We cannot trust the nation and the Sirdars and the end of him if he had remained would have been that he would have been urged into war in time or, failing to enter into it, would have been murdered. He will get a comfortable pension, and the best thing that could happen to him would be that he should be sent to England and kept there.

Refer now to Currie's letter. I suspect the present was the conclusion he desired and played for, nor was he in the wrong though the intermediate passages of arms and other circumstances often shewed sad indecision and want of arrangement and vigour.

I am here again on the court's affairs, and stupidly, for the court has given two opinions already; yet Fraser presses for more. This court will not alter what it has said and there is no use bringing the clearest evidence of sedition etc., to which sedition *it* has said no guilt is attached. I suppose Fraser wants the evidence only and will decide himself. He ought not to have asked for an opinion, but for evidence only. At present the proceedings are absurd, there is no one in the position of prosecutor, no one to examine witnesses on the prosecution. The court is apparently counsel for the defence, and the enquiry is very one sided. I have only to give my evidence, and I hope the Rest. or the G.G. will decide.



At Hyderabad they are doing *pretty well* but no great progress is made nor will any thing be done; we must interfere in the end even to get our 60 lakhs of debt and the sooner the better.

I am much interested in Louis Napoleon, one cannot help being so. I hope most sincerely he will succeed, and win admiration and respect from all. May so obscure an individual as I am venture through you to offer my profound congratulations?

## LETTER 91

[This is the last letter of the series, and is dated five months later than the preceding one, intervening letters not having been preserved. It is also the longest letter of the collection. The greater part of it need not be reproduced, as it refers to the orders of the Governor-General on Taylor's action at Shorapur, and is summarized below.]

*Shorapur 10th Sept. 1849*

I did not receive yours of the 19th July in time to write by the last overland mail of the 1st. There had been heavy rain to the westward and the post was delayed. Many thanks for the money which is very acceptable indeed, and I was infinitely obliged to Morris for his punctuality in payment. More than I deserve perhaps; but India is so quiet, and there is really so little of political interest to write about, that, if I flag now and then, he must kindly bear with me as before, and indeed you also. I believe there is hardly a point of political interest except Hyderabad, which is as it was, if indeed the silent work of deterioration from continued bad Govt. and no government at all, be not progressing farther than we can observe. The Nizam has dismissed Shumshool

Oomra; a nobleman whom, as Minister, Genl. Fraser acknowledged with some distrust, but after five months of experience of his discreetness and good intentions, complimented on his withdrawal from office, in a very handsome manner. I do not think S.O.O. could have done much if he had remained; but he was at least steady and practical, and had a sincere desire to do his utmost to retrieve affairs, and also to bring the expenditure under the income. The Nizam, it appears, expected a large sum of money from him, some say 50 lakhs, and as the ex-Minister kept a tight hand over minor officials, they were one and all anxious to get rid of him. The Nizam dismissed Shumshool Oomra suddenly; the Resident in pursuance of the strictly noninterference system now declared at Hyderabad did not oppose it in any way. After the dismissal the Nizam, as Fraser writes to me privately, began to insult the ex-Minister in every possible way, and very unjustifiably demanded that he should pay the debt to the Company from his own resources, which was of course impossible. Seeing that S.O.O. could not be bullied, H.H. has again made advances to him and asks him privately to take up the Ministry again, which for the present is respectfully declined. But in refusal there is as much danger as in acceptance, for if refusal be persisted in there will be a recommencement of arrogance and insult. I dare say therefore that Shomshool Oomra may again take office, but it is to no purpose. The debt to the company is I believe over 60 lakhs with interest, Lord Dalhousie will not accept instalments, requiring payment of the whole or a cession of territory equal to the debt in value. How it may end I know not.

I question whether the Nizam has enough private treasure to pay it, and, having become avaricious in his old age, is not inclined to part with a rupee, if he had enough. The Bankers have been paid nothing for the last year, indeed more, and are all in difficulties, troops are in the normal condition of arrears, and whether the Govt. may get on for another year is at least a subject of doubt. The end must be our eventual interference by a Commission; but how, or when this may come to pass, is at present necessarily impossible to declare. Certes the Govt. itself does not appear to possess any vigour or power sufficient to extricate itself from embarrassment. In regard to matters here, the Government, that is Lord Dalhousie, has decided on the Ranee's case, and on that of the prisoners who were tried by a commission at Lingsoogoor. The prisoners were declared innocent of the attack upon the government post, and the imprisonment, or rather detention, for it was hardly confinement, was considered by the court sufficient atonement for their overt act of mutiny etc., while the Ranee was removed. This acquittal of course absolves the Ranee of guilt on that score, and she also has been allowed to return. General Fraser advises me of having written to Bangalore, to request she may be sent up under a suitable escort, and I am requested to receive her with all possible respect which I shall do when she arrives. The Governor General censures me for having allowed myself to have been misled and of therefore misleading Government in regard to her; and I have submitted to the censure, painful as it is, after 6 years of hard slavery, simply because I well know that it is no use making any fight

about it, nor appearing to consider myself ill used. Government do not like complaining men, and I am not one, but I shall tell you how the censure is unjust and not deserved, that, if it be in your power or lie in your way at all without inconvenience, you may mention it to Mills, or any other India House magnate with whom you may be acquainted.

[Taylor goes on to explain that he had constantly reported the Rani's disreputable conduct, and its bad effect on the Shorapur administration. In September 1847 Lord Hardinge sent an order for her removal. Taylor's absence at Hyderabad and his illness there caused delay in the execution of the order, and during that time a Government post was attacked and robbed. The removal of the Rani in February 1848 led to disturbances which necessitated the summoning of troops. A Commission was appointed to try, not the Rani, but certain Bedars involved in the robbery and disturbance. There was delay in its meeting owing to a scarcity of officers. No Prosecutor was appointed and the Commission naturally started on the presumption that the prisoners were innocent. Moreover, some of the evidence against them was false, as Taylor himself pointed out to the Commission. The Commission therefore acquitted the accused of having attacked the post, and considered that the detention they had undergone had sufficiently punished them for their share in the disturbances. The Governor-General considered that this finding also absolved the Rani, and that Taylor had been misled, and had therefore sent misleading reports.]

Though Taylor felt this censure deeply, it seems to have been to some extent justified, so far as the Commission's finding went, as Taylor admits having accepted, and presumably acted upon, evidence which proved to be false. As regards the removal of the Rani, Lord Dalhousie later caused his Private Secretary to write to Taylor to the effect that the removal was justified. The matter had no bad result for Taylor. Fraser wrote strongly in his favour to the Governor-General who later accepted the Resident's recommendation to appoint Taylor to the charge of one of the districts ceded to the British Government in liquidation of the Nizam's liabilities.]

## EPILOGUE

Thus ends the series which has been preserved of the letters of Taylor to Reeve. Although later letters have not survived, we know that the correspondence continued till Taylor left India and that the friendship of the cousins continued till Taylor's death. The remainder of Taylor's career has been sufficiently indicated in the Introduction. It is enough to say that, after the time that these letters end, the Rani returned to Shorapur and gave further trouble till she died, if not in the odour of sanctity, at least on terms of friendliness with Taylor. When Taylor was transferred to another and a higher post in 1853, the young Raja was old enough to be allowed the management of his affairs but was already displaying the vices which were to bring him to disgrace and to a violent death. The Resident, Fraser, at last retired, a few months before Taylor left Shorapur, his disagreement with the Governor-General, and the latter's impatience with him, having become too marked to permit of his remaining.

That Reeve, a busy man with many correspondents, thought these letters from India worth preserving, is the best proof that they were regarded as both interesting and important.

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